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IDEALISM
AS A PHILOSOPHY

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IDEALISM
AS A PHILOSOPHY

BY

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IDEALISM
— A —
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TO THE MEMORY OF

BERNARD BOSANQUET

PREFACE

Both as a student at Oxford and, later, during more than twenty years of teaching experience, I have often felt the need of a book which, like a map, would help a beginner to thread his way through the tangled mazes of idealistic theory. Such a book I have here tried to write. Whether I have succeeded or failed, the reader must judge for himself.

I have aimed at presenting idealism in such a way that a student, whilst having much to add and amplify, should have little to unlearn. I have tried to lay foundations on which he can securely build, whatever direction his interest in idealism may take. I have tried, above all, to give him the right approach to the subject, to put into his hands the clues by the intelligent use of which he can unravel the rest for himself through first-hand study of the writings of the great idealists. Such study is, of course, essential, and this book is meant to be an introduction to, and not a substitute for, it. I want to open avenues, not to close them.

For this reason I have deliberately left many loose threads of arguments and touched on many problems without pursuing them to the end. My chief fear, to confess it frankly, was that I might imbue the reader with a false sense of finality and encourage him to think that this book tells him all he needs to know about idealism. I provide only the appetizer: he must get the dinner for himself.

In drawing my "map" of the idealistic maze, I have found it convenient to distinguish four main types of idealism. They are:—

1. *Spiritual Pluralism*—the theory that Reality is an ordered society, or hierarchy, of minds or spirits.
2. *Spiritual Monism*—the theory that Reality is the manifestation of a single spiritual force or principle, impersonally conceived.
3. *Critical*, or *Kantian*, *Idealism*—which is not a theory of the nature of Reality, but limits itself to an examination of the "possibility" of such a theory.
4. *Absolute Idealism*—the theory which interprets Reality as the "appearances" of the Absolute.

This order is *systematic*, rather than historical, though, as a matter of fact, types 1, 3, 4 have developed in this order in the history of modern philosophy. These historical affiliations are certainly not negligible, for it is not often that a theory can be completely understood apart from its historical setting. For this reason, too, I have drawn freely on historical material in order to illustrate each type. But the fundamental fact, after all, is that for us present-day students of philosophy all four types form equally part of our historical heritage. All four types are represented, with varying nuances, among leading contemporary thinkers. All four types are involved, in varying degrees, in polemical controversies with rival philosophies, like realism, naturalism, pragmatism. All four, meeting in the minds of present-day students as in a focus, influence each other, and, by mutual give and take, shape and are shaped into the forms in which we now know them.

PREFACE

As this book is addressed, not to the expert and the specialist, but rather to the general reader and the beginner in philosophy, I have begun it, by way of Introduction, with a chapter on "How to Study Philosophy" (Ch. I). The exposition of the actual subject, "Idealism," is divided into a *Prologue* (Ch. II), which seeks to introduce the reader to the terms, "idea," "ideal," "idealism," in their historical context; four *Parts* (Chs. III-X), each dealing with one of the four types of Idealism; and an *Epilogue* (Ch. XI), in which the four types are briefly compared so as to bring out, by contrast, the characteristic individuality of each.

For the sake of freshness of vision, I have avoided, or made but casual mention of, many of the well-worn stock-phrases of idealistic writers, especially those which have become mere catchwords for polemics. In general, I have tried to make the burden of technical terms as light as possible. The chapter on "Berkeley's Idealism" (Ch. III) throws, I hope, some fresh light on the beginnings of modern idealism, whereas the following chapter is intended to show how the issues raised by Berkeley are still "live" issues at the present day, and give rise to a variety of critical attacks, especially from the "realist" side. The chapter devoted to James Ward (Ch. V), the comparison of the idealisms of F. H. Bradley and B. Bosanquet in Ch. VIII, and the two chapters (IX and X) given exclusively to Bosanquet are offered as a tribute to three great English thinkers, all of whom death has recently removed from our midst. Ward was the foremost exponent of Spiritual Pluralism, Bradley and Bosanquet were the leading representatives of Absolute Idealism, in the English-speaking world. The chapter on "Bosanquet's

Idealism" (Ch. IX) first appeared in the Bosanquet Memorial number of the *Philosophical Review* (Vol. XXXII, No. 6, 1923). The chapter on "Bosanquet's Philosophical Theory of the State" (Ch. X) is here reprinted from *The Political Science Quarterly* (Vol. XXXIV, No. 4, 1919), in order to show in detail how an Absolute Idealist proceeds in the philosophical interpretation of a particular field of human experience.

To the American readers of this book I owe, perhaps, a word of explanation for omitting the greatest of American idealists, Josiah Royce. It might be thought that Royce should be classed as an Absolutist, but he uses the term "Absolute" as a synonym for "God," and, though his thought has in it a more pantheistic strain than that of most Spiritual Pluralists, yet he does conceive God at bottom as a personal spirit, and thus would have to be classed as a Spiritual Pluralist rather than as an Absolutist. In short, my reason for omitting Royce is that he is not a "pure" enough instance to illustrate the type to which, on the whole, he seems to me to belong.

The present book is an expansion of a smaller volume which was published, in 1924, under the title "Idealism as a Philosophical Doctrine." All the chapters of the earlier book have been largely rewritten for inclusion in this one, and fresh chapters have been added. It is a great pleasure to me to express here my thanks to various friends whose suggestions and criticisms have helped me to improve the old chapters—Professor A. E. Taylor, of The University of Edinburgh, Scotland; Dr. F. C. S. Schiller, of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, England; Professor A. R. Lord, Rhodes University College, Grahamstown, South Africa; Miss Susan L. Stebbing, of Bedford College for Women, London, England; Professor D. S. Robinson, of Miami University, Oxford, Ohio; Dr. and Mrs. Edouard Sandoz, of Cambridge, Mass. To Dr. Georgia Harkness, of Elmira College, Elmira, N. Y., I am under special obligation for the revision of proofs and the preparation of an enlarged index.

R. F. ALFRED HOERNLÉ.

University of the Witwatersrand,
Johannesburg, South Africa.
January, 1927.

e Nature of the Self.

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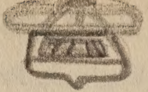

realistic + idealistic

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INTRODUCTION

IDEALISM

Chapter I

HOW TO STUDY PHILOSOPHY

1. PHILOSOPHY AS LOVE OF WISDOM

Philosophy is the "love of wisdom," and to love wisdom is, as the ancient Greeks already knew, a "way of life." It is a search rather than a finding, a pursuit more than an attainment. For wisdom is like other ideals in this, that without the effort to realize them they are nothing; whilst yet they transcend every realisation, however successful, and humble every best by the vision of a better. Like knowledge, wisdom is inexhaustible; like goodness, it sets us tasks which we can never finish. Hence, the love of wisdom which is philosophy cannot be imparted like information. It can only be acquired and cultivated, like a virtue, by personal devotion and effort, for it is a spirit and an attitude of mind which make the true philosopher a "citizen of the universe."

There is a deep-seated need in the human mind, the roots of which strike far beneath all other needs and interests. This is the need to feel at home in the universe. From this source spring all philosophies and all religions, though it is only in the most highly developed philosophies and religions that we have become reflectively conscious of this need and of what it demands for its satisfaction. It is a need which at once demands to understand the universe and to approve,—nay, to love it. It wants at once truth and perfection. It wants what men mean when they say "God."

2. PHILOSOPHY AND PHILOSOPHIES

Thus to love wisdom is to love it after the manner of the great masters, however much in detail their teachings may differ from one another. Hence, the description given above claims to be true of philosophy at its best. It is with philosophy as it is with any other pursuit. The highest achievement is open only to him who possesses the highest qualities. There are many philosophers whose work, without being negligible, yet measures up but partially to the ideal standard of our description. There are many whose resources in experience and in the power to read the lessons of experience fail in some degree to meet the demands of philosophy at its best. Yet, it is one of the chief fascinations of philosophy that the lesser contributions to it, too, count in their time and place, and that there is room at the top for an astonishing variety of diverse points of view. The truth is, that the goal is the same, but the ways to it are many. The goal is a vision of the Real which shall satisfy both head and heart, but this goal is apt to wear different aspects according to the side from which it is approached. This is the reason why Philosophy exists only as split up into philosophies, and why, even within a "school" or "movement" of philosophical theory, each individual thinker, great or small, will have his own measure of individuality.

3. PHILOSOPHICAL THEORY AND PHILOSOPHICAL THINKING

We began by talking of philosophy as love of wisdom and as a way of life. But just now we also spoke of it as concerned with theory and with thinking. How are these things connected? For, wisdom, we are apt to say, is more than theory, and living is more than thinking. In thinking, we seem to withdraw into ourselves—it "goes on in our heads," as we say—and to be dealing with words and other symbols, and not with the realities themselves for which these symbols stand. A theory seems "abstract." It contemplates the "concrete" fact at one remove, so to speak. Yet, if this be true, how can the philosopher, by thinking, reach the heart of Reality which is his goal?

To answer our question we must open our eyes to a difficulty which will frequently hamper our efforts to rise from the level of ordinary thought and belief to that of philosophical insight, viz., the ambiguity of common terms, such as "theory" and "thinking." This ambiguity arises from the fact that whilst we are all familiar with theories (for we hold theories, advocate them, act on them, all our lives), and with thinking (for we do it every day), such familiarity does not guarantee that we "know" what theory and thinking really are. Our theory of what "theory" is may be a very bad theory, and when we try to think what thinking is, the untutored results are likely to be poor. In short, the ambiguity of our terms, and the resultant contradictions, are a sure mark of bad theorising, of slipshod thinking; and, by the same token, better theorising, more thorough thinking, is the cure for our trouble.

Let us, then, see just what philosophical thinking really is, for philosophical thinking differs from the thinking which we do in everyday life only by being more methodical, more sustained, more comprehensive in the materials it deals with. Life in familiar surroundings makes small demands on thinking. It is only in emergencies, or under the spur of competition, or when a problem has to be solved, that we "take thought." Still, the occasions for thinking are manifold enough in normal human life. The struggle for a living, ambition, love, a religious crisis, a stirring novel or a play, the stimulus of a scientific discovery—any of these may set us thinking. Only, such thinking is not yet philosophical thinking. At best, it tends to grow into philosophical thinking by acquiring a momentum of its own, widening its scope, and emancipating itself from the urgencies of the immediate occasion. We think, in fact, at different levels at different times. There is the thinking of the "practical" man, spurred by desire, or passion, or, at any rate, by the need for prompt decision and action. There is the thinking of the scientist for whom the particular case is interesting only as a clue to a general law. There is the thinking of the philosopher who takes Reality as a whole for his province. Above all, philosophical thinking is, in a pregnant sense, *reflective* thinking. That is to say, it presupposes the results of other levels of thinking. It uses them as materials or "data." But it uses not only these, but all modes of human experience, including feeling and action. So far from being divorced from or opposed to all these, it needs them and is empty without them. In being "reflective," it takes them up into itself and brings to light their "real nature," their "truth." In philosophical thinking, we do not cast practical life and art and religion and science aside. We do not turn our backs on them. On the contrary, we seek by reflection to make clear to ourselves what each really is, and thus to think them together as disclosing in their several ways the nature of Reality as a whole.

4. PHILOSOPHICAL THINKING AS "REFLECTIVE"

This point is so important that it is worth while to dwell on it at greater length, by pointing out some supplementary aspects of philosophical thinking as reflective.

(a) Like all thinking, and more especially like all scientific thinking, it seeks general principles, and deals with the particular case in the light of the most general principle available. But, whereas scientific thinking seeks to be dispassionate and disinterested in the sense of ignoring, or abstracting from, the feelings and desires which may in our experience form the setting of the particular case, philosophical thinking seeks to transmute or "sublimate" the feelings and desires of the particular occasion into the feelings and desires appropriate to the general point of view applicable to that case. For, to reflect on the general character of the particular case is to see it in its true nature and in its true proportions, and that is the first condition for the readjustment of our feelings and desires.

In 45 B.C., the Roman statesman, Cicero, lost by death his daughter Tullia—"Tulliola," as he affectionately used to call her. His letters to his friends record for us to this day his abandonment to grief and to despair. The bitter blow seemed to have shattered his life. The fate of Rome seemed to weigh as nothing in the balance against his personal bereavement. It was then that his friend, Servius Sulpicius, in a memorable letter, bade him reflect upon his loss in the proper perspective; bade him think upon it in scale with the incidence of death and misfortune in human life at large, with the rise and fall of cities, the growth and decay of civilisations, the universal human fate. Such consolation was truly "philosophical," because it emancipated the mind from fixation in the particular instance, and, lifting it to the level of a general principle, transmuted and purified its emotional response to the personal loss. Grief, on this plane of thought, does not cease to be grief, but it is robbed of its sting. Pain is still pain, but it expresses itself no longer as impotent rebellion against unalterable fate. It no longer robs the soul of the strength and courage to "carry on." In short, if to think of the particular case in the light of a general principle is at all to apprehend it in its "true" character, then such thinking is also the condition of the right response in feeling and action. It is not too much to say that "Not my will, but Thine be done" contains, rightly interpreted, the principle of all philosophical thinking on matters involving feeling and desire.

(b) A second way in which philosophical thinking, as reflective, differs from all other thinking is that it investigates what all other thinking, even scientific thinking, takes for granted. Thus, it is only through reflective thinking that our attention is directed to the so-called "subjective" side of all our perceiving and thinking. We are ordinarily so absorbed in the "objective" side, *i.e.*, in what we perceive and think, that we ignore the processes of perceiving and thinking without which the object would not be revealed to us as it is. We tacitly proceed on two assumptions. One is that the object is really as we perceive and think it to be. The other is that the object exists just so, whether or no we perceive and think it at all.

It is only reflective thinking (in the branch of philosophy called *Epistemology*, or theory of knowledge), which drags these presuppositions to light, and puts them in front of us for examination and defence on their merits. So, again, we take for granted in all our thinking certain general principles, sometimes called "laws of thought," and it is only reflective thinking, under the name of *Logic* (another branch of philosophy), which makes these principles a subject of study on their own account. Yet another branch of philosophy, called *Metaphysics*, which is the theory of Reality as a whole in its most general character, shows that these "laws of thought" bear their name, not because our thinking imposes them arbitrarily on Reality, but because Reality imposes them on our thinking, they being but the most abstract and general truths which hold for anything and everything that is thinkable at all, *i.e.*, for everything which is, in any way at all, an "object" for our minds.

(c) Metaphysics, further, takes the fundamental concepts in terms of which the several sciences deal each with its own subject-matter, and submits them to critical study in their interrelation with each other within the system of Reality as a whole. In this task the method of reflective thinking may be called "synoptic." It seeks to "think things together"—to be at once inclusive and systematic; and in order to be systematic, it must be both "analytic" and "synthetic." For, to analyse is to distinguish different elements within a complex or a whole, thus making its structure explicit and articulate, whereas the complementary movement of thought synthesizes, *i.e.*, insists on the character of the complex, or whole, and on the interdependence, or correlation, of the different elements within it.

(d) And, lastly, philosophical thinking, for all that it is reflective, is yet also *direct.* We cannot philosophise in a vacuum, as it were. We need something to philosophise *with,* or to philosophise *on.* We cannot reflect where there is nothing on which to reflect. Hence, philosophy presupposes, as its material, its "data," the concrete world of human experience—Nature, History, Social Life; and again the organised common moulds in which the feelings, thoughts, actions of individual minds are shaped—Art, Science, Morality, Religion. With these, as far as possible, the philosopher must be acquainted from his own individual angle, and within the range permitted him by ability and opportunity. But in reflecting on these, he does not deal with Reality at one remove. He does not desert the concrete and actual for the abstract and shadowy. Or, if he does, his philosophising has gone astray. For, in principle and in truth, his effort in reflection is directed at the heart of the Real, not away from it. He seeks to grasp its nature more fully, more systematically, more truly. And this is best described by saying that philosophical thinking is, or yields, a *further acquaintance* with the nature of what it thinks about, an acquaintance at higher level of conscious possession.

The view of philosophical thinking which is here put forward may be summed up by saying that, so far as any thinker attempts, or pretends, to philosophise about anything—be it a question of science or religion, of art or of morals—with which he is insufficiently acquainted, he is sure to produce a bad theory for lack of data. On the other hand, philosophical reflection brings about a further and fuller acquaintance with those very data "about" which we are said to philosophise. It is not, therefore, an indirect way of apprehending its objects as compared with a direct one. It is not a substitute for any other, still less for a better, way of knowing. It is not a mongering with words or other symbols in lieu of the realities for which these stand. Reflective thinking is none of these things, because it presupposes, needs, and uses as its data all that in any way falls within the range of human experience; and it presupposes, needs, and uses these data in just that form or mode of experience which is most appropriate to them. For, its aim and function is to seize the "essence," *i.e.*, the true nature, of whatever its object may be—ultimately, of Reality as a whole. It presupposes perception, feeling, action, imagination, and, so far, may be distinguished from them. But it is not opposed to, or divorced from, them; on the contrary, it completes them. For, in being based on them, and continuous with them, it shares their direct contact with the Real, but surpasses them in that it yields an acquaintance with, an insight into, the nature of the Real which is at once more comprehensive and more profound.

Incidentally, this view of the nature of philosophical thinking is an attempt to restate afresh a truth first formulated by Hegel and his successors. It thus belongs to the story of "Absolute Idealism," which is one branch of the philosophical movement, known as "Idealism," to the study of which the present book is devoted.

5. THE NEED FOR PRACTICE IN PHILOSOPHICAL THINKING.

From all that has been said, it follows that the student should approach philosophy, not as a subject to be "got up," or as a lot of information to be memorized, but as an *art* to be acquired by practice. He should think, not of learning philosophy, but of learning *how to philosophise.* "We become virtuous," said Aristotle, "by performing virtuous actions; by behaving as a man who is virtuous does behave." With equal justice, we may say that a man becomes a philosopher only by philosophising, *i.e.*, by thinking as philosophers do think. To study philosophy, then, is to practice philosophising.

It is helpful to think of philosophising as an art, because it prepares us to find true of philosophising what we know to be true of any other art or occupation which requires skill.

Thus, (a) we know that men differ in natural endowment and innate ability for different kinds of performances. Some have a "gift" for mathematics, or music, which means that with less trouble they achieve a greater excellence than their less gifted fellows. So there is a natural aptitude for philosophising, which is distributed in varying degrees among different individuals.

(b) But, natural aptitude alone is not enough. There must also be training and practice. No one has any right to expect that philosophical insight will come to him without trouble or effort. We take it for granted that the understanding of scientific truths or the appreciation of works of art requires a mind properly prepared and trained, yet we are generally too ready to assume that we ought to be able to understand a philosophical theory on first reading, and that if we fail, it is the philosopher's fault. The truth is that it requires trouble and practice first to understand, and then to maintain one's hold on what one has understood. Here, as elsewhere, the proverb holds that "practice makes perfect."

(c) Thirdly, the best practice is to follow good models. The acquisition of technique and method in any activity requires one to do as the masters do, and, by repeating their procedure, to improve one's own skill. As a carpenter has to learn the use of his tools, so the student of philosophy has to learn the technical language of philosophy, and to think the thoughts which that language has been designed to express. He must serve his apprenticeship in the craft, for, if he is to do good work, even more if he is to do original work, he must be a competent craftsman first—he must acquire philosophical scholarship. The only adequate training for this is to practise philosophical thinking by re-thinking for himself the theories of the philosophical masters.

(d) And, lastly, with practice comes skill, and with skill comes ease and pleasure in the doing. Indeed, the pleasure of philosophical thinking has been ranked by philosophers, from Plato down, among the purest and most satisfying pleasures open to mortal man. Ancient and modern thinkers are at one in this estimate. Aristotle's praise of philosophical contemplation as man's nearest approach to a godlike activity is echoed by a modern of moderns, Mr. Bertrand Russell, when he claims for philosophy that it makes for impartiality and truth in thinking, for justice in action, and in feeling for "that universal love which can be given to all." [1]

6. UNDERSTANDING A THEORY AND BELIEVING IT

The reason why Philosophy is split up into many philosophies has already been mentioned.[2] But this diversity of theories is apt to perplex the beginner, who may feel unable to make a rational choice among so many competing claimants, or who may be disappointed not to have presented for his acceptance an authoritative body of philosophical doctrine on which all philosophers are agreed. In this situation, it is well to remember that it is one thing to understand a theory, and another to accept and believe it; and that it is possible to do the former without the latter. Of course, every genuine philosophical thinker believes his own theory and is convinced of its truth, or, at any rate, of its fundamental soundness in principle, whatever faults there may be in detail. It is the expression of his unique vision of the world, the quintessence of his experience of it. It is the ripe fruit of his reflection on the whole spectacle of the world and his own part in it. And, being the man he is, and experiencing life as he does, he can see the world in no other way.

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[1] *The Problems of Philosophy,* p. 249.

[2] See § 2, above.

Thus, different philosophical world-views have accumulated down the ages and gone to swell our common philosophical heritage. Nor have they been without influence on each other, for, among the most important determinants of the thinking of even the most original philosophical genius are the theories of his predecessors and contemporaries, from which he learns even when he disagrees with them and rejects them. Hence, the beginner should be in no hurry to hitch his wagon to a star, when there is such a galaxy of stars to dazzle him. He should sternly put down the desire to repose prematurely on the authority of a great name. It is part of his training, part of the practice and discipline of philosophical thinking, to learn to think himself into widely different world-views, and by comparison of each of them with others, as well as with the common facts of human experience which they claim to interpret, to discover what are the arguments for and against each. Thus, his apprenticeship in the art of philosophical thinking need not resemble the progress of a traveller who sleeps in a different inn every night, and always thinks the last the best. He need not tumble from one belief into another, nor change his convictions with every fresh treatise. For, it is possible to *entertain a theory without accepting it,* to consider it without at once making it one's own. It is possible to hold a theory as an hypothesis and to explore it as such, suspending meanwhile the decision on whether it is to be adopted or not. In this way, the student will grow in power and range of philosophical thinking, and gradually accumulate the materials for forming a philosophical world-view of his own. The differences between philosophical theories, and even their disagreements, will no longer perplex him—rather, they will add to the richness of the scene, making his voyage of discovery more fascinating. He will be safe in anticipating that there is no outstanding philosophical theory but enshrines something of the truth. And, at the very least he will gain in skill and elasticity of philosophical thinking even by working through theories which, in the end, he decisively rejects. The mere effort of understanding will keep his thinking from hardening into a groove outside of which it cannot move; and there is no more bracing stimulus to the development of his own power of philosophical thinking than the challenge of a view which impresses him as mistaken. Without intellectual sympathy it is impossible to acquire genuine philosophical scholarship, and the lack of this is always likely to appear in some narrowness and blindness of one's own views. All of which comes down, in the end, to the good old maxim, "Try everything, and keep the best."

7. PHILOSOPHICAL TERMS

One of the lions on the student's path with which he must be prepared to wrestle, is the lion of philosophical language. Like scientists, philosophers use technical terms, and with as good a right. This is not to deny that some philosophers have used technical terms to excess, but, in themselves, they are necessary instruments of thought. They are as indispensable in philosophy as in grammar. It is just because we are so thoroughly familiar with language by the daily use of it, without ever reflecting on its structure and laws, that the grammarian, when he turns his attention to these things, requires technical terms to describe his finding in such a way that others, too, can attend to and discern these same things. So the philosopher, in philosophising about the facts of everyday experience, *e.g.*, about perception, or moral judgment, or religious emotion, will discern truths concerning these of which we are otherwise unaware, and he is entitled to use technical terms in the formulation of these truths, provided that these terms direct others to the perception of the same truths. Thus, every technical term which is properly and skilfully used, at once expresses the results of previous philosophical thinking, and acts for the student as a cue for so conducting his own thinking as to verify, if possible, the same results.

Hence, practice in philosophical thinking is inseparable from practice in the use and the understanding of philosophical terms. But, there is, from the nature of the subject, a special difficulty in learning the use and understanding of philosophical terms. The bulk of the substantives, adjectives, and verbs of the vocabulary of the "man in the street" deals with perceptible things, perceptible qualities, perceptible processes or actions. Hence, the meaning of the word (the sound) can always be taught by exhibiting, for actual perception, an instance of that to which it applies. Thus we learn to connect the sound with the thing, quality, or act. A name for a certain kind of thing was originally invented when first that kind of thing was singled out by attention and discriminated from other kinds of things. Now, the name, to all who "know" its meaning, is a cue to attend to that kind of thing again, and, if no example of the thing meant should happen to be present for actual perception, the name still makes us "think of" it, *i.e.*, we use memory or imagination and attend to the thing thus. But the philosopher, moving at the level of reflective thought, as a rule lacks these simple devices for supplying perceptible instances of the kind of thing which his terms mean. To realise their meanings for oneself, *i.e.*, to make these meanings real in actual instances held before one's attention, is itself already an achievement of philosophical thinking. That is why we said above that practice in philosophical thinking and in using philosophical language with correct understanding go hand in hand.

Let us consider a few examples. An important technical term in *Logic* is "judgment." What, then, is the meaning of that term? Many of the elementary textbooks tell us that "judgment" means a statement of fact, such as "the sky is blue"; "all men are mortal"; "there is a God"; "no odd number is divisible by two." That is to say, they give us examples together with a general formula ("statement of fact") which is intended to direct our attention to, and enable us to grasp in thought, *what* it is in all these (and other) examples that makes them judgments. Yes, but what is it? Not that all the above examples consist of black marks on white paper; nor that these visible marks stand for certain sounds (words); nor that these words, in turn, stand for certain things and their qualities and relations. For, the mortality of men, or the existence of God, as such, are not judgments. We do not penetrate to the judgment-character in the above examples until we have learnt to discern by reflection that in each of them something is before the mind (as an object of thought) which may be either true or false. In other words, wherever we have a judgment we have a peculiar object of thought which involves, as part of its nature, a claim to be true (though actually it may be false). If this is what "judgment" means—and for our present illustration this suffices—then the term, once understood, at once directs us to think of the meaning of certain forms of words (assertive sentences) in such a way that we attend to it only as an object of thought which claims to be true.

There is, however, one difficulty in learning to understand philosophical terms, against which it is well to be forearmed, lest one become needlessly discouraged. This difficulty is due to the ambiguity of philosophical terms which itself results from the use of the same term, or the same set of terms, in different philosophical theories. It is obvious that the meaning of a term is bound to vary with the *context* in which it is used. The same term (word) in the context of one theory may have a somewhat different meaning from that which it has in the context of another theory. Thus, once more, we find the mastery of philosophical terms and of philosophical thinking go together. For, to understand different theories, we have to distinguish them; and to distinguish them, we have to learn the different shades of meaning in which each may use the same terms. Most theories of knowledge, for example, agree that in knowledge we can and must distinguish between the mind which knows and what that mind knows, *i.e.*, between "subject" (knower) and "object" (known). So far, so good: this is a distinction which, we think, we all easily recognise. But, trouble begins as soon as we try to explain more in detail just what the terms "subject" and "object" are, respectively, meant to cover. Different theories draw the line between subject and object in different places, and accordingly use the terms in correspondingly different senses. What for one theory may be "objective," may be "subjective" for another, and *vice versa.* Here, therefore, meanings can be kept fixed and stable only by bearing in mind always the *context* in which they are used. "Object," for example, tends in ordinary speech to mean predominantly a "physical" object, a "material thing." Thus, a man's body is an object, but what about his soul? Or, the earth is an object, but not the law of gravitation. A bird's song is an object, but the beauty of it is not. Clearly, what we are doing when we use the term "object" in this way, is to identify the original distinction between "subject" and "object" with the distinction between "mind" and "matter." But "object" was to have meant whatever is, or may be, known (perceived, thought, imagined, etc.) by a mind, and if we are to stick to this meaning, we cannot demand that every object must be a material thing. For, we can be aware of countless things which are not material, *e.g.*, the mind itself, or beauty. Indeed, in the widest (and best) philosophical sense there are "objects" real and unreal, material and mental, actual and imaginary, true and false; for an object is anything whatsoever which any mind can attend to. Even a feeling of pain is an "object" when attended to and thought about.

To illustrate further, let us pursue the distinction of subject and object in another direction. Let us apply it to the analysis of the kind of experience which we call a sense-perception, *e.g.*, looking at the blue sky. There is the looking (subjective), and there is the blue sky (objective). The looking, so we may innocently go on to say, is a mental act, an act of mind or consciousness. The blue sky is what the mind sees, what it is conscious of. But here trouble, once more, begins. Watch your neighbour looking at the sky. His looking, as you see it, is not a mental act, but physical behaviour—a tilting back of the head and a focusing of the eyes on a point far distant in the vault of the sky. Perhaps you try to escape from this consequence by saying that the physical behaviour is the instrument of the mental act, that the conscious mind acts through the body. Very well, examine then your own mind or consciousness and distinguish *there* what is subjective from what is objective. Accordingly, you shift your point of view. You "look into your own mind," and find that the "object" is now part of the field of your mind; the blue colour you see becomes a "sensation" you have. And if you try to save the "object" from being thus engulfed by the "subject," you will most likely end by calling it the perceptible cause of your sensations, and fall into fresh trouble thereby.

The moral of this brief object-lesson in the way in which philosophical terms have become ambiguous through receiving different meanings in the context of different theories is simply this, that the only safeguard against this ambiguity, the only method of stabilising the different meanings, is to keep the theoretical contexts distinct, and the meaning of a term in each context fixed in that context.

Every philosophical theory presents the universe from its own distinctive point of view. To study philosophy is to make oneself at home in these points of view, applying them to the world of one's own experience, and learning to fit the terms of each point of view to that world. Thus we come to understand the different theories, to appreciate their strong and their weak points, and to gain mastery in philosophical thinking.

Throughout the following chapters, there will be constant opportunity for putting these lessons into practice.

PROLOGUE

IDEALISM AS A PHILOSOPHY

Chapter II

IDEA, IDEAL, IDEALISM

1. IDEAL *v.* IDEA

Idealism is a word which has two sources. One source is the term "idea." The other source is the term "ideal." "Idea" is the original term, which has come to us by direct descent from the philosophy of Plato, who himself took over the term from some of the scientific and philosophical writers of the fifth century B.C. "Ideal" is a modern substantive formed from the adjective *idealis*, which is itself a late Latin word formed long after the Romans had taken over the term "idea" from the Greeks into their own philosophical vocabulary. The original root of "idea," and, therefore, of "ideal," is *id-* (Latin *vid*-ere), which has yielded verbs and substantives to express the act of seeing and the objects of sight.

In current modern speech, as distinct from the technical language of philosophy, the meaning of "idealism" is determined by that of "ideal." Now, "ideal" is a word which itself has several shades of meaning. It has recently been defined as "a conception of what, if attained, would fully satisfy; of what is perfect of its kind, and, in consequence, is the pattern to be copied, and the standard by which actual achievement is to be judged." [1] An ideal is always a pattern, or standard, of excellence, perfection, or supreme value. But this common, or central, meaning of the term assumes different shades according to the different views that may be taken of the relation of ideals to what is "real," to "actual fact." Ideals may be regarded either (*a*) as realised, or, at least, realisable, in fact; or (*b*) as unrealisable in their fulness, but as defining the direction in which we must seek for realisation; or (*c*) as unrealisable because purely fanciful and imaginary. These three possible ways of regarding the relation of ideals to facts depend, of course, on the kind of ideal with which we are dealing. When we meet, as we occasionally do, with an object which is perfect of its kind—an object which is "as good as it can be," or "which cannot be bettered"—we say that the ideal of that kind of thing is here embodied or realised. Thus, *e.g.*, the ideal of human beauty may, now and again, be found temporarily realised in this or that human body. On the other hand, in morality, and, again, in religion, we tend to think of supreme excellence as something which it is indeed our duty to strive after, but which we can never hope to realise completely. By comparison with God, who is worshipped as the embodiment of perfection, the saintliest of men is still a sinner. The more conscientious we are in our striving after moral goodness, or virtue, the less likely are we to be satisfied that our performance measures up to our aspiration. But, thirdly, it may, of course, happen that our ideals are mistaken, that we misconceive the nature of perfection. We may imagine false ideals which lead us astray in judgment and action.

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[1] See *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. vii., p. 86 ff.

Plato

Materialists

All these shades of meaning reappear in the current, non-philosophical, uses of the term "idealism." An "idealist," especially as contrasted with a "realist," may be a man who is blind to facts as they are and invests them in his imagination with a perfection which is not theirs. Or, again, he may be a man whose life is ruled by ideals, who puts duty above inclination, public above private good. Or, lastly, he may be a man who prefers to think the best of his fellows and of the world around him, and who, where others see only imperfection, sees perfection, if not realised, at least in process of being realised. Such a one sees the "soul of goodness in things evil."

To turn from these popular meanings of "idealism" to the philosophical meaning is to turn from "ideal" to "idea." Literally, "idealism," as the name for a philosophical doctrine, means a theory of Reality in terms of "ideas."

This statement, as it stands, does not, of course, help us much. It is a riddle rather than an answer. If we would find out what it means, we must explore the meanings of "idea."

Now, unfortunately, in the course of centuries of philosophical discussion, "idea" has acquired even more meanings than "ideal." Indeed, it has become a term so ambiguous and tricky that some modern writers avoid the use of it altogether. Nay, some idealists, like the late Bernard Bosanquet, have come to discard even the term "idealism" itself because of its misleading associations, and describe their own philosophical enterprise as "speculative philosophy." It is, thus, possible to be an idealist without "ideas." Or, in other words, it is possible, as we shall see, to state the theories which traditionally go by the name of "idealism," without using the term "idea" at all. Great as the part played by that term has been, its use has been something of an historical accident. At any rate, it is a term which can now be discarded as inconvenient and misleading, without sacrificing anything that is essential to the statement of the several distinct types of theory which are commonly classified together under the label "idealism."

However, before we can safely discard the term "idea," we must try to understand the chief senses in which it has been used by philosophers. For, although the term has become inconvenient precisely because of the many different senses in which it has been used, yet it is part of our task to make ourselves familiar with these different senses and to learn to distinguish them.

The term "idea" occurs in the vocabulary (a) of popular speech, (b) of certain psychologists, (c) of most philosophers.

2. (a) MEANING OF "IDEA" IN POPULAR SPEECH

In popular speech the phrase, "to have an idea of" an object, is nothing but a circumlocution for thinking, believing, knowing, imagining, intending, etc., something. Thus, "I have an *idea* that it will rain to-day" is equivalent to "I *believe* (expect) that it will rain to-day." "My *idea* is to build a house of my own, rather than buy or rent one," means that I *intend* (prefer) to build rather than buy or rent. When I cannot answer a question, I may reply that "I have no *idea*," meaning that I *know* nothing of the subject. This popular use of "idea" has, as we shall see below (*c*), filtered down into current speech from the technical language of modern philosophy. But the term, in this process, has lost all precision. "Having an idea" is now nothing more than a loose way of expressing any kind of thought or imagination—a recollection of past experience, a plan for future action, a day-dream, the framing of a scientific hypothesis. In all these cases we could express our meaning just as well, without any mention of "ideas," by using one of the verbs for mental activity (judging, conceiving, remembering, etc.), and naming the object with which the activity is concerned. Or, rather, most commonly the object, *i.e.*, *what* we are thinking, is not a *thing* which can be named, but a *judgment* which requires to be expressed in a sentence—either in an assertory sentence or else in a dependent clause beginning with "that" *e.g.*, above, "that it will rain."

Again, when "ideas" are currently labelled good, clever, brilliant, foolish, silly, these adjectives apply to *what* we are thinking of. We mean that what we are thinking of is relevant or irrelevant, adequate or inadequate, to the situation. I have, *e.g.*, to solve a difficult problem. I try vainly this way and that. At last a "brilliant idea" occurs to me, *i.e.*, I happen to think of a course of action which will produce the desired result. A man who is said to be "full of ideas" is a man whose memory, imagination, thought range over many objects, and who, consequently, is resourceful and well-informed. In short, all occasions on which we talk of "having ideas" can be dealt with according to the maxim: "There are no ideas, there is only thinking." It is good discipline to make clear to oneself that "to have an idea of——" or "to have an idea that——" are simply metaphorical expressions for "thinking of——" or "thinking that——."

3. (b) MEANING OF "IDEA" IN PSYCHOLOGY

Certain psychologists have tried to rescue the term "idea" from this loose, popular use, and to reinvest it with a precise technical meaning. They distinguish three levels, or stages, in the development of our knowledge, viz., sensation, perception, ideation (or conception). They take the third stage to be characterised, as its name indicates, by the emergence of "ideas." It is in this sense that we find psychologists discussing whether animals are capable of "forming ideas," or are limited to sensing and perceiving. It is easiest to make the point clear to oneself by reflecting on the obvious difference between, *e.g.*, seeing a colour or hearing a sound, and remembering or thinking of that colour or sound when they are no longer seen or heard. We commonly say that an object is "present" when we perceive it, "absent" when we imagine it or think of it. Now, it is to the technical description of this difference that many psychologists restrict the term "idea." They define an "idea" as "the reproduction, with a more or less adequate image, of an object not actually present to the senses." [1] As this is not a book on psychology, it is not our business here to examine or criticise this definition. We will notice only that, if the definition is taken strictly, we can have no "idea" of any object which, like the relation of identity, or virtue, or God, cannot from its very nature be "present to the senses." Yet we can obviously *think* of these things, and know various propositions about them; and we can also think without images. Hence, it would seem that, even for psychology, any account of thinking or knowing which restricts these activities to the use of "ideas," as here defined, must be inadequate.

In what truth?
or value?

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[1] Quoted from Baldwin's *Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology, q. v.* "Idea."

4. (c) MEANING OF "IDEA" IN PHILOSOPHY—(1) PLATO

And so we pass, thirdly, to the philosophical meaning of "idea." Or, rather, we ought to say "meanings," for the fact is that in the course of more than 2,000 years of philosophical discussion the meaning of "idea" has undergone changes so profound that, whilst each stage is, no doubt, recognisably connected with the preceding one, yet they also differ so widely from each other as to compel us to treat them as distinct. Up to the philosophy of Kant and the post-Kantian idealism of the nineteenth century, we can distinguish three chief stages in this history. (1) For Plato, "ideas" are "real natures" or "essences." (2) For St. Augustine and the mediæval thinkers, "ideas" are the patterns in God's mind of all created things. (3) For Descartes, Locke, and their followers, "ideas" are all objects of whatever sort which human minds in any way apprehend. The subsequent history of the term "idea," in Kant, Hegel, and the idealists of the nineteenth century down to Bradley, Bosanquet, and others in our own day, is not for our purposes of the same importance. For, of these later thinkers it is true that their idealisms can be stated without using the term "idea." In this introductory chapter, therefore, we shall confine ourselves to the three meanings enumerated above. Their history is, briefly, as follows:

(1) The original, non-technical, sense of "idea" among the ancient Greeks was, probably, "look," "appearance," "form." So far as sight is concerned, it is obviously by their characteristic look, appearance, form that we identify, or recognise, things for what they are. Now, *what a*

Protagoras – first idealist –
number – the essence of things.

thing is has been technically called its "nature" or its "essence."[1] There is no reason why the essential nature of a thing should be restricted to what can be apprehended of it by sight. On the contrary, the essential natures of things might be such as to be incapable of being apprehended by any sense-organ whatever: they might be discernible only by intellect or reason. This is, in fact, the development which the meaning of "idea" has undergone in becoming a technical term in Plato's philosophy. The details of this development do not concern us here. It may well be, as Professor A. E. Taylor has argued with great learning, that the term first acquired a technical meaning in the School of Pythagoras, passing from "look" or "appearance," *via* "shape," "figure," "structure" of a body, to the geometrical structures or figures which the Pythagoreans regarded as constituting the real natures of different sorts of bodies, and as underlying their various sensible appearances. Other scholars have disputed this view, but whatever the truth in this matter may be, there is general agreement that the term "idea" came to be cut loose from all restrictions to visible appearance or geometrical figure, and to be used quite generally for the real or essential nature of anything. Socrates, who was Plato's master, insisted that every moral virtue or value—the Just, the Good, the Beautiful, and so on—has an "idea" or "real nature." There is, as we should say, a *principle* of justice, goodness, beauty, etc., which is more or less adequately embodied in, or exemplified by, the acts or objects which we call, severally,

Heraclitus says everything is flux – Plato wants something permanent – his ideas – all objects he says can be reduced to universals – in other words concrete objects are only universals (ideas) – no such thing as an object when all its qualities (universals) are taken away.

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[1] These terms, too, are translations from the Greek. "Nature" translates "physis," which appears to have meant originally what a thing is made of, its stuff, or substance (*cf.* J. Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy*). "Essence," *via* Latin *essentia,* translates Aristotle's term "ousia," the "being," or the "what-it-is," of a thing.

just, good, beautiful, etc. Socrates, too, urged the importance of gaining of these moral "ideas," or principles, the kind of knowledge which enables us to define them, and thus to distinguish, e.g., acts which are really just from those which merely appear to be so. Thus, "ideas" enable us to escape from the vagaries of "opinion" into the security of stable "knowledge." It is clear, too, that such principles or *universals* (to use a technical term which philosophy owes to Aristotle), are not sensible, corporeal, geometrical, but "invisible" and "immaterial," objects to be apprehended by reason, not by the bodily eye. Precisely how far Socrates himself carried the development of this theory of "ideas" is a question much debated by scholars at the present day. But, at any rate, in the writings of Plato we find the theory generalised to cover the whole field of universals.

This statement requires some further explanation, in order that we may appreciate clearly the difference between the "idealism" of Plato and the idealisms of later thinkers.

The theory of ideas, as we find it in Plato, is a theory of the objects of scientific knowledge. It tries to tell us what sort of objects scientific knowledge is really concerned with —what exactly it is that the scientist is seeking to apprehend in the particular examples of stones, plants, animals, etc., which he is examining. It is obvious that the scientist is not interested in particulars *as such*. He is not interested in *this* particular example of a plant as against all others of the same kind. He is interested in it for the sake of what it can teach him about all others of the same kind. In other words, as we say nowadays, he studies particulars in order to discover the principles or laws of which the particulars are "instances" or "cases." A law, once discovered and formulated, will apply to, and "explain," *all* particulars of the same sort or kind. In other words, every law is a "universal" exemplified in a range of "particular cases." Let us illustrate. There is much talk just now of "cancer-research." A concerted effort is to be made by medical men to discover the cause and cure of cancer. "Cancer," here, is a "universal." The research aims at the discovery of the "idea," the "real nature," of cancer. No doubt the researchers can succeed only by examining particular instances of cancer, as various as possible, in a large number of patients suffering from the disease. But what they study in each "case" is the *nature*, or principle, of cancer *as such*, and so far as they grasp that nature in any case they will, *ipso facto*, have a knowledge of cancer in all other cases as well. Let it be noted that we have carefully said, "So *far* as they grasp . . . " We do not affirm that we can learn all about cancer from any single case. On the contrary, the symptoms and manifestations of cancer will vary somewhat with varying circumstances, and it will require the study of a large number of different cases if we are to acquire knowledge of the whole nature of cancer. Still, it remains true that the object of scientific curiosity in each particular case is the universal. We study cancer *as such*—the Platonic "idea"—in any and every particular cancerous growth. Statements about cancer in medical treatises are all "universal predications." For, their subject is cancer *as such*, the universal; and this is why they are true of every particular case of cancer. The point which we have here illustrated from cancer-research holds good for every investigation in every branch of science. The objects of science are always universals, or what Plato called "ideas."

Only, we must take "science," here, in a wider sense than the Natural, or Physical, Sciences from one of which our illustration was taken: we must include the Mental and Moral Sciences as well. In fact, "science" here covers every inquiry or research, in which the object we seek to know more about, is a universal, a principle, a law, exhibited in one or more particular cases. The Platonic theory of "ideas," then, is a theory of the "real natures" of particular things, *i.e.*, of the universal kinds, principles, or laws, of which particular things are instances or cases.

Now, there is one all-important point about this theory of ideas as objects of scientific knowledge which must be clearly understood.

Particulars, Plato tells us, are perceived by the senses: ideas (or universals) can be apprehended only by thought. In modern language, they can be only *conceived*, not perceived. Now, an object conceived is commonly called a *concept*, and hence Plato's ideas, like modern universals, are often, and correctly enough, called "concepts." But "concept" is a dangerous word to use. For it has acquired associations for us which are quite alien to Plato's "ideas." We tend to think of a concept as peculiarly a creature, or product, of mental activity. We are commonly told that we "form" concepts by a comparison of particulars; that particular instances are given "facts," existing independently of us, but that the corresponding concept is something of our own making which "exists only in our own minds." Particular cases of cancer—to recur to our example—exist in the real world; the concept of cancer is a creature of scientific theory and exists only in the minds of medical men. At any rate, this is a widely current modern view. Now, it is true enough that without thinking or reasoning, *i.e.*, without the mental activity of observing, comparing, analysing instances, rejecting what is irrelevant, connecting what is relevant, we should never discover any universal or law at all. Consider, *e.g.*, the amount of intellectual labour which has gone into the discovery of Newton's law (*i.e.*, concept) of gravitation, or Einstein's law of relativity. But, does it follow that these laws or concepts are therefore "mental" in a sense in which the facts from which they were elicited are not "mental"? Does it follow that these objects, because they are "concepts," exist only in the minds of those who think them? This conclusion has often been drawn, and those who have drawn it have then accused Plato of the philosophical crime of "hypostatising concepts," *i.e.*, of treating as independent realities what are really products, not to say fictions, of the human mind. But this is a misinterpretation of Plato's meaning. His "ideas" are not products of any mind, not even of the mind of God. They are *objects* apprehended by mind, not *states* of the apprehending mind. They are not *formed*, but *discovered*, by thinking. And in discovering them, just as in discovering a scientific law or principle, we attain to scientific knowledge of the essential nature of the particular things and events which we perceive by our senses. Thus, if we call Plato an "idealist," we must mean by "idealism," not the modern theory connected with Berkeley's name, which is most often so called, but strictly the theory that concepts (universals, laws, principles) are the essential natures of particular things, and the real objects of scientific knowledge.

There is one characteristic, however, of Plato's "ideas" which may, at first sight, seem to be lacking in the "universals" and "laws" of modern science. Ideas are, for Plato, not merely principles of explanation: they are also standards of perfection. They are not only the "essential natures" of particular things, but they are also "ideals." This comes out especially in Plato's treatment of moral and mathematical "ideas." What visible straight line is perfectly straight? What wheel, or other round object, is perfectly circular? What just action is perfectly just? Particulars are all more or less imperfect embodiments of "ideas." They have an "essential nature," but they exhibit that nature more or less incompletely. Quite generally, for Plato, no actual object of the senses quite realises the ideal pattern, as it were, of the kind of thing it is. This treatment of universals as ideals is apt to strike us moderns as strange. Yet, we are not really unfamiliar with it. Whenever we distinguish particulars of the same kind as *good* and *bad of their kind*, we are really applying Plato's principle. In every kind of thing, specimens (cases, examples) will range from those which are fine and fully-developed to those which are poor and stunted. Our judging of cattle or vegetables at agricultural shows depends wholly on this principle. Every teacher, too, knows the difference between a good example which exhibits the essential nature (universal) of a certain kind of thing, *e.g.*, a disease, clearly and completely, and a bad example in which that nature is hard to discern. In morals, the character of universals as ideals is especially striking. When we consider men in respect of their work or their duties, *e.g.*, as husbands, fathers, citizens, soldiers, etc., we can obviously distinguish between work well done and work ill done. Of two husbands, one may be good, the other bad, *i.e.*, one man's conduct may be all that a husband's ought to be, whereas the other's may fall far short. Yet, in order that we may thus compare them in respect of the degree in which each conforms to the "idea" of husband, which is also the "ideal" of husband, they must both *be* husbands. There would be no point in judging that a certain man is a good or a bad husband, when that man is not married at all. Thus, paradoxically, what we are, that we can be more or less perfectly, and the moral demand for each of us, in his profession and social relations, is to be what he is as well as he possibly can. This is why it is not absurd to appeal to a man with the exhortation, "Be a man!" He *is* a man, yes; but *being a man* is nonetheless a task in which a man may fail or succeed in varying degrees. Thus, one's "essential nature" (what one really is) is always also an "ideal" to be realised. In this point our modern thinking coincides with Plato's.[1]

The fact that Plato conceived his "ideas" also as "ideals" lends special interest to the position which he assigned to the "idea of good" in his theory of Reality. We could wish that he had devoted at least a whole dialogue to argument expounding his theory of the "idea of good," instead of dealing with it only in a few paragraphs in the dialogue called *The Republic*. There it is described in somewhat metaphorical language by being likened to the

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[1] Here are two examples, picked at random, which illustrate how the nature (idea) of a thing may be used as a standard of perfection (ideal) by which to judge particular cases. In a newspaper description of a lion at the Zoo, I read: "Though lithe and well-built, he is not a perfect specimen of a lion. The qualities he lacks, however, are apparent only to those well versed in the subject of perfection in lions." And here is a passage from the Preface of Ruskin's *Unto this Last:* "There should, at these Government manufactories and workshops, be authoritatively good and exemplary work done, and pure and true substance sold; so that a man could be sure, if he chose to pay the Government price, that he got for his money bread that was bread, ale that was ale, and work that was work."

Hegel's - means immanent in the world genius.

sun in its relation to natural objects. Just as the sun makes all things visible, so the "idea of good" makes all things intelligible. It is "that which imparts truth to the known and the power of knowing to the knower."[1] And, again, just as the sun is the condition of the growth and nourishment of living things, so the "idea of good" is the cause of all things being what they are. In short, Plato seems to be here adumbrating the view that there is a principle of goodness or perfection in the universe which manifests itself in all there is, and in the light of which we must try to understand all things, if we would know the full truth concerning them. Obviously this is a tremendous theory—extremely startling and difficult when held up against our everyday "common-sense" beliefs about the world. But, if for "idea of good" we were to say "God," the theory would sound more familiar, even if it remains just as difficult to the understanding. Still, all who take seriously the belief that the world is the creation and manifestation of a perfect God, are bound to say concerning God exactly what Plato says concerning the "idea of good." And, no doubt, it was this feature of Plato's theory of ideas which profoundly influenced the development of Christian theology, and facilitated the transition to the second meaning which the term "idea" assumed in the history of European philosophy.

5. (c) MEANING OF "IDEA" IN PHILOSOPHY—(2) MEDIÆVAL PHILOSOPHY

(2) The second chief meaning of "idea" has its roots in the philosophies of Philo, surnamed "The Jew," and

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[1] *Republic*, Book VI, 508D; Jowett's translation.

Plotinus, the founder of the so-called "New-Platonist" school. But it has become important for us mainly through its adoption by St. Augustine, and its consequent influence upon the philosophy of the Christian thinkers of the Middle Ages. The difference between the Platonic and the Augustinian theory of ideas is best understood by considering the relation of ideas to God. In Plato's philosophy God may fairly be said to occupy a relatively subordinate position. In the imaginative account of creation, in the *Timæus*, God is represented as making the world to the pattern of the "ideas," but the ideas are certainly not represented as being themselves created by God. For Plato the ideas, not God, are the supreme realities. On the other hand, when the Theism of Jewish and Christian thought came into contact with Greek philosophy, in the resulting give-and-take the balance was shifted in favour of God. If God is the supreme, and, indeed, the all-inclusive, reality, the "ideas" must somehow be conceived as constituting His being or "essence." This was facilitated by their character as "ideal patterns" which only thought can apprehend. Thus God came to be regarded as creating the world in accordance with these ideal patterns, which constitute his very nature, or essence, as Divine Intelligence. They are perfect, because He is perfect. The perfection of His nature is expressed in the perfection of what He thinks, just as the artist's nature is expressed in the æsthetic quality of the thoughts which he strives to embody in his works. Thus, the "ideas" become the creative thoughts of God, the eternal and immutable patterns in which He displays His essential nature as all-wise, all-good, all-powerful, and in accordance with which He creates the sensible world.

In this theory the status of the "ideas" is subtly changed, and the change proves to be of far-reaching importance. They are still, in a sense, "objects"—they are what God thinks. But they are also the very essence of God as thinker. The ideas now are what they are because God is what He is: in other words, they are His way of manifesting Himself. They are wholly one with Him: through them He reveals His infinite perfection.

To put the contrast as sharply as possible: for Plato the ideas, though they may be apprehended by mind, are in existence and nature independent of mind; for the mediæval thinkers, they are constitutive of God's mind, for God's mind expresses itself in what He thinks, and apart from the activity of His mind they are nothing.

6. (c) MEANING OF "IDEA" IN PHILOSOPHY.—(3) LOCKE AND OTHER MODERNS

(3) The mediæval theory thus identifies the "ideas" with the essence of God's mind, without, however, changing their character as universals and ideals. The third theory, which meets us at the threshold of modern philosophy, on the one hand makes "ideas" depend on human minds, and, on the other hand, drops the restriction of the term to universals and ideals, so that it now covers any and every object of which any human mind is at any time aware. Indeed, among "ideas" in this modern sense there bulk most largely precisely those particular objects of sense-perception which Plato had so sharply distinguished from "ideas" in his sense. It is thus forcibly brought home to us how, in spite of a recognisable connection from step to step, the meaning of the term "idea" nonetheless undergoes

profound alterations. The stages, briefly, are: universal—ideal pattern constituting God's creative thought—object of human perception and thought.

The classical definition of "idea," according to the third theory of it, is John Locke's "Whatever is the object of the understanding when a man thinks."[1] "Thinking" is here used by Locke, exactly like Descartes' *cogitare* or *penser*, as a general term for all mental activities by which an object may be said to be "presented to," or "apprehended by," the mind. This is clearly shown by Locke's further description of ideas as "the immediate objects of the understanding in the widest sense." This "widest sense" covers perceiving, remembering, imagining, conceiving—in short, to use the terminology of present-day psychologists, all *cognitive* activities, all modes of being conscious of objects.[2]

The sting of this theory, however, lies in the word "immediate." This implies a distinction between the "immediate objects" of consciousness and another kind of objects of which our apprehension is only "mediate." The former objects are apprehended "directly," the latter only "indirectly," viz., in so far as they are "represented" by the former. In short, "ideas" are "representatives," sometimes even described as "copies," *in* the mind of objects *outside*. The external world is known to us by being, as it were, mirrored in our ideas. This is the so-called theory of representative perception—a theory according to which we perceive the external world by means of its mental representation in "ideas."

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[1] *Essay on the Human Understanding,* Book I., ch. vi., § 8.

[2] The use of "idea" for the "immediate object" of thought is common to all the writers of this period. Thus, Descartes defines "idea" as "anything of which the mind is directly aware," and Malebranche, similarly, calls it *"l'objet immédiat de nostre esprit."* Descartes, in controversy with Hobbes, expressly defends his use of "idea" by reference to its mediæval use for the "perceptions of the Divine Mind"—a clear illustration of the linkage of theories.

7. THE THEORY OF REPRESENTATIVE PERCEPTION

Let us analyse, briefly, an example, so as to see what exactly this theory means. Suppose a person to look at a rose. Then, according to the theory, there are involved three distinct factors. (a) There is the person's mind which perceives. (b) There is what the person "immediately" perceives, viz., a colour patch of characteristic shape. (c) There is the rose itself, the physical thing. It is of the essence of the theory to maintain that (b) "represents" (c) to the percipient mind, and that strictly, *i.e.*, immediately, or directly, (c) is not perceived at all. What is perceived is only (b), and (b) makes the mind think of (c), and only in this indirect sense can the mind be said to "perceive" (c) by the mediation of (b). In other words, instead of saying, as we innocently do in ordinary life, that we "see a rose," we ought, according to the theory of representative perception, to say that we see a coloured patch which is our "idea" of the rose. It represents the rose which, itself, we cannot see.

This theory is the result of two distinct lines of thought. (1) One of these is scientific, and deals with the *causes* of perception. (2) The other is philosophical, and deals with the *truth* of what we perceive.

(1) Attempts at a causal theory of perception, *i.e.*, at a theory explaining how perception comes about, go back, like so much else in philosophy, to the Greeks. Their common

scheme is that the object somehow through the sense-organs affects, or stimulates, the mind and produces in the mind an effect by means of which the mind perceives the object. Through the Middle Ages back to the Stoics, and, beyond them, to Democritus, we can trace a tradition that perception takes place through the formation, under the stimulus of the external object, of *imagines in mente*, or *objecta interna*, which as "internal" effects are referred back to the "external" objects as their causes. This theory received a considerable impetus at the threshold of the modern era through the development, on the one hand, of the transmission theories of light and sound, and, on the other hand, of the physiology of the senses. Physics and physiology thus combined to explain perception as caused by a stimulus (*e.g.*, a ray of light) proceeding from an object to a sense-organ, and thence conveyed by the nerves to the brain. At this point, the theory divided into two branches. Strict materialists, like Hobbes, tried to stop with the effect in the brain, and thus treated every "idea" as a *phantasma*, *i.e.*, as "an appearance which remains in the brain from the impression of external bodies upon the organs of sense." But most thinkers, accepting the existence of minds as well as of bodies, went on, like Descartes and Locke, to a theory of the interaction of body and mind, according to which the effect produced by the external stimulus in the brain produces, in turn, in the mind a "sensation" or "idea of sense." Thus, when we perceive an object, *e.g.*, a rose, what we are immediately aware of are various sensations of colour, smell, touch, etc., in our minds, which we interpret as the effects caused in our minds by the external object, *i.e.*, by the rose as a physical thing. Thus the ideas in the mind "represent" the object of which they are the effects. *Directly* we perceive only the ideas which the object causes to appear in our minds. The object itself is not perceived at all, but known only *indirectly* by inference from effect to cause.

Plausible as this theory is at first sight, especially because of the apparent scientific warrant for it, yet it has been riddled by criticism and shown to be utterly incoherent and self-contradictory. For, if the theory is true, we are confined to our "ideas," and of the external objects which are supposed to be their causes we can know neither that they exist nor what they are like. Consequently, we cannot know whether our ideas "represent" anything at all. The very theory that our ideas "represent" objects which are not ideas will be but another, more complex, "idea" or "object of thought," and thus there is no escape from the circle of ideas. On the rock of this fatal flaw the theory suffers shipwreck, and in anything like its original form it no longer finds support among competent philosophers.

(2) The other line of thought which has led to the theory of representative ideas does not, like the previous one, attempt to account for the *origin* and *cause* of ideas, but seeks rather to explain what is meant by the *truth* of an idea. A "true" idea, we are apt to say, is one to which there "corresponds" an object in the "real" world; a "false" idea is a mere figment of our minds, to which, as to a dream or a fancy, nothing corresponds in the real world at all. Thus, a true idea has a representative function: a false idea represents nothing. It has, as some moderns put it, no "objective reference." For example, the scenes and events which we witness in dreams are "objects" presented to our minds as surely as are similar scenes and events witnessed in waking life. In both cases

Idea = modification of mind substanc

we have "ideas"—objects of which we are immediately aware. Yet in the one case we treat these objects as mere figments, in the other we treat them as representing "real" events in the physical world. Clearly, according to this line of thought, the theory of representation is a device for bridging the gap between the realm of mental ideas and the realm of physical realities. Immediately, we have nothing but "ideas," and so far one idea is as good as another. A dream-idea, an imagination-idea, are indistinguishable from ideas of real things, unless we introduce the theory of representation, and say that the latter ideas represent something, whereas the former represent nothing. But, unfortunately, in this form the theory suffers from the same defects as the causal theory, viz., it confines us to the circle of our ideas and shuts us off from physical things in such a way that the relation of representation between idea and thing, supposing it to exist, can never come directly to our knowledge. We can never compare idea and object, so as to verify their correspondence.

At this point we may conveniently note the ambiguity of the metaphor by which ideas are said to be "in" the mind. The supposed contrast between ideas "in" the mind and the objects "outside" the mind which cause ideas or correspond to them, has led to more loose thinking than any other phrase in the vocabulary of philosophers. "In" and "out" are, literally, metaphors taken from space, and, therefore, inapplicable to a mind. For a mind is not like a box in which, or outside of which, ideas can be supposed to be. "Being in a mind," then, can be only a metaphor for "being an object to a mind" or 'being thought of"; and if the phrase is taken in this sense, we cannot infer from it, as has often been done, that ideas are "mental," *i.e.*, that they are, not merely objects apprehended by the mind, but actually mental states or processes—bits of mind, as it were. Correspondingly, an object "outside" the mind ought to mean simply an object which is not being apprehended, as in the phrase "out of sight, out of mind." But, instead, being "outside" has often been identified with being "physical," with the result that physical objects have been regarded as incapable of being directly apprehended by mind at all. Their being physical has been held to place them by definition "outside" mind, *i.e.*, beyond the reach of direct apprehension, which is limited to the effects "in" the mind produced by the "external" thing. Thus, for the legitimate distinction between objects apprehended and objects not apprehended by a mind, there has been substituted the illegitimate distinction between ideas "in" the mind and the "external" world which the ideas "represent." But, when we brush aside the cobwebs of this theory, we can see that, though we may express the fact of a physical thing, *e.g.*, a tree, being perceived by saying that it is "in" the mind which perceives it, yet the tree does not thereby cease to be physical. Nor is there any good reason for treating the perceived tree as a mental idea representing another tree itself unperceived.

8. TRANSITION TO MODERN IDEALISM

If, then, we reject these confusions, and with them the whole theory of "ideas" as mental representatives of physical things, does anything of value remain in the "new way of ideas" to which Locke attached so much importance?

The answer is "Yes." But, if we are to appreciate this

(Epistemology of absolute Idealism
(read in connection with p. 217)

value, we must abandon, once and for all, the false lead of the notion of representation, with all its presuppositions and consequences. Once we have resolutely done this, we shall discover important truths by following up the clues implicit in Locke's "way of ideas." But we shall find, also, that these truths can be stated without retaining the term "idea" with its burden of misleading associations.

(1) In the first place, then, the way of ideas, once it has shed the theory of representation, introduces a definitely *new* point of view into philosophy. To consider objects as "ideas" is to consider them in an entirely *fresh context*, viz., the context of "objects of mind." Objects are of many kinds, and ordinarily we group them in several contexts according to their several kinds. There are, *e.g.*, objects real and unreal, actual and imaginary, true and false. And, correspondingly, there are different contexts, or "worlds," of objects. A "real" object is a member of the context called the "real world," in which neither giants nor fairies, neither Hamlet nor Pickwick, have a place. But when we watch a performance, or read the play, of *Hamlet*, or are absorbed in the *Pickwick Papers*, we live, for the time being, in a context, or "world," of imaginary persons and imaginary events. The orderly and consistent distinction of these two worlds is one which, as children, we gradually learn to make, and which even grown-up people do not always wholly achieve. There are objects whose status is in doubt. Ghosts, for example, are by some people accepted as real, while others treat them as figments. Dreams, again, introduce us to yet another context, or world, of objects. Thus, there are many kinds of objects to apprehend and many ways of apprehending them. An educated mind is able to sort these

various kinds of objects, more or less tidily and consistently, into their several contexts or worlds, and it passes, with ready adjustment, from world to world. In business, or politics, or science, our work lies in the "real" world, but when, in leisure hours, we take up a novel or go to a play, we pass into the world of imagination, whilst during sleep we may visit the world of dreams. In ordinary life we take these, and similar, distinctions for granted, and our practical, even more than our theoretical, interests lead us to occupy ourselves chiefly with the "real" world and to rank it as superior in status and importance to the others. But all these worlds are equally open to, and enter into, our experience. What we perceive, think, imagine, feel, may belong to any one of these worlds.

Now, to make us attend to, and reflect on, this fact is, we may fairly say, the first great service rendered to us by Locke's "way of ideas." For, there is one context which includes all the above contexts, viz., the context of "objects of mind," or, more simply, the context, or world, of "mind" or "experience." In this context all the others meet. In this context they can be compared and distinguished. Here they reveal their several natures and relations to each other. Considered as an "idea," *i.e.*, as something apprehended by a mind, a physical object finds itself one of a crowd of other objects, some of which are, like itself, physical, whereas others belong to all sorts of other worlds. For, a mind is not limited to the "real," still less to the "physical," world. It may soar into the realms of Art on the wings of imagination, or in day-dreams amuse itself with unsubstantial fancies. And even in its "real" world it will acknowledge objects which are not merely "physical," *e.g.*, other minds, human and animal, and in religion a spirit, or spirits, divine. Thus the context of "objects of mind," or, as it has sometimes been called, the "standpoint of experience," has, as against all other contexts, or worlds, the outstanding merit of *inclusiveness*. It emancipates us from the preoccupation, which practical life imposes on most of us, with the real, especially in the narrow sense of the physical. It projects, as it were, all objects and their "worlds" on a single plane. For, whatever the differences between objects, and however diverse the worlds to which they belong, as objects of the same mind, as items in the same field of experience, they meet on common ground. And, if we take our stand on this common ground, we shall develop a philosophical programme which excludes no kind of object and no kind of experience, but holds that every kind of experience has some contribution to make to our knowledge of the Universe. Every kind of object reveals something of that whole which, as a whole, we call the Universe, or "Reality," in the technical sense of philosophy.

This, then, is the first of the distinctive notes which idealism strikes in modern philosophy.

(2) But, secondly, from the *world* of mind our philosophical interest may shift to the *life* of mind. Instead of thinking of mind merely as a focus, or meeting-point, of objects of all sorts and kinds, we may throw the emphasis rather on the *activity* of mind. But it matters greatly how we do this. For, if we misconceive the mind's activity in relation to its objects, we shall lose whatever gain our first step, above, has brought us. Perhaps our everyday way of speaking of mind and mental activity may here furnish us with a helpful clue. We certainly speak of mind as active: it feels, perceives, thinks, reasons, wills—

in short, it exists and lives by *doing*, by being active. But we also express the very same fact by saying that mind "has" feelings, thoughts, desires, etc. And we even speak of these as "filling" the mind, as being its "contents." There are modern thinkers who insist on a sharp distinction between (mental) act and (non-mental) object. In every perception they distinguish the act of perceiving from what is being perceived; in every thought, the thinking from the object of thought; in general, in every experience, the experienc*ing* from what is experien*ced*. Now, whatever may be the value of this distinction—and this is a problem to which we shall return [1]—the point which we must bear in mind here is that there is another way of looking at these facts. When we perceive, no doubt we are active—we attend, select, engage our interest. But what we perceive comes to us; it is not mainly, and originally never, of our choosing, still less of our making. Some object stimulates us and we "respond." It attracts and holds our attention. We become absorbed and lose ourselves in it. So, again, in thinking we are active, but what we think, once more, comes to us: the object of thought reveals itself to us, it determines our thinking. Whenever our thinking is good thinking, it is under the control of the object. When we are logically compelled to think so and not otherwise, then what we think is true. When we reflect upon these familiar facts, the "activity" of mind begins to wear a different face. It threatens almost to pass into passivity. Obviously we cannot separate the character and mainsprings of mental activity from the character of the "contents" or "objects" upon which that activity is exercised. It would certainly be false to conceive that activity as exercised upon a passive and indifferent material. We cannot perceive, think, will just what and when we please. In most ways it would be truer to say that "our" activity (the activity of "our" minds) is the activity of *what,* as object or content, fills our minds. If "I think" is one side of the truth, certainly "the world thinks in me," or "reveals itself in my thinking," is the other side. Our minds are microcosms, drawing all that is included in their range of awareness from the macrocosm of the Universe. And their activity and life is the activity and life of the Universe in them.[1]

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[1] See, below, Ch. iii, pp. 87 ff., 94; Ch. iv, pp. 101-109.

This is a second note struck by modern idealists—not by all, but certainly by many. But, whether struck by few or many, this second note is undeniably consonant with the first note, above.

(3) So far we have considered the activity of mind, and the various worlds of objects which enter into our experience, as if the contemplation of objects, be it in perception or thought, be it by way of knowledge, imagination, or dream, were the main business of mind. We must now remark, thirdly, that there are worlds in which mind is creative—worlds which are made and sustained by mind. Whether Nature, or the Physical World, can exist without a mind to apprehend it is a question to which we shall have to return. But there can be no doubt whatever that there are Spiritual Worlds through participation in, or membership of, which our minds attain their own fullest realisation. Art, Morals, Economics, Politics, Religion are facts which exist only in the medium of mind. If there were no minds in the world, there would be no works of art,

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[1] See, below, Ch. viii, § 10.

no moral conduct, no economic activities and organisations, no states, no churches. All these are realities in, and through, which minds express themselves. A full knowledge of what mind is and does is impossible apart from a full knowledge of these worlds which mind creates and through which it realises its nature to the fullest. They are the very substance of its life.

It is the peculiar merit of idealism to have led the way in the philosophical study and appreciation of these worlds which mind not only contemplates, but creates and sustains as organs for its own self-realisation. The "Philosophy of the Human Mind," which, in the hands of David Hume and the English Empiricists, had remained within the limits of introspective psychology, went out (so to speak) into the world under the leadership of Kant and Hegel and their followers in Germany and England, and drew within its compass the whole achievement of mind in Society and Civilisation. Abandoning the "subjective" point of view of psychology, it acknowledged, not only the reality of Nature, but also the reality of the Spiritual Worlds which mind has erected on the basis of, and through mastery over, Nature. The "Philosophy of Mind" thus became the "Phenomenology of Spirit" [1]—the theory of all the ways in which Absolute Spirit appears and manifests itself in Nature and in Man, in short, the theory of Absolute Idealism.

This, then, is the third feature in the distinctive philosophical achievement of idealism. Many would hold that it represents the high-water mark of idealism; that idealists never aimed higher or succeeded more nobly than when they conquered for philosophy these realms of spiritual facts which are also spiritual values—realms which exist through mind and in which mind achieves the fulness of its own nature.

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[1] This is the title of the treatise which first established the reputation of Hegel.

9. TYPES OF IDEALISM

It seems not unreasonable to acclaim *Absolute Idealism* as, in principle, the highest form which idealism has assumed. For, it has learnt the lesson of Locke's "way of ideas" in that it explores every avenue of human experience for the contribution it can make to a fuller knowledge of Reality. It regards mental activity as the process through which Reality discloses or reveals itself as an object of knowledge. And it treats the worlds which our minds create and sustain as the highest manifestations of the Absolute Spirit.

But the various *motifs* (to borrow a term from music), which go to make up the many-hued texture of idealism, can be combined in other patterns than that of Absolute Idealism. Thus, we may conveniently distinguish, in addition to Absolute Idealism, at least three other types of idealism. Of these, *Spiritual Pluralism* is, next to Absolute Idealism, philosophically the most important, and probably it is more popular. It is the theory that, in last analysis, the universe is a Society of Spirits of all kinds and degrees. We know from ourselves what it is to be a mind or spirit, and with this clue to guide us we must interpret the rest of the universe. There will, obviously, be no difficulty in accepting, or postulating, the existence of God and other superhuman spirits, and in the animal world we are presented with sub-human spirits in varying degrees of remoteness from the human pattern. By analogy, we must suppose that plants, too, and even seemingly inorganic, or physical, objects, are really minds of a low order—an order so low that we can no longer in practice apprehend them as minds. What we call the physical, or material, world is merely the way in which these lower kinds of minds appear to our senses. Thus, the universe is a vast society of spirits, forming an ordered hierarchy from the lowest up to God. In Part I of this book we shall study this type more in detail, just as Absolute Idealism is the topic of Part IV.

The remaining two parts are devoted to two less important types of idealism, viz., *Spiritual Monism*, which regards Reality as a single, impersonal, spiritual force, manifesting itself in all things (Part II); and Kant's *Critical Idealism* which opened up the way for the development of Absolute Idealism (Part III).

All types of idealism, except Kant's, belong to the branch of philosophy which is called *Metaphysics* and which is the inquiry into the ultimate nature of Reality. Kant's Critical Idealism is not a metaphysical theory. It raises what it regards as the prior question, whether metaphysics is possible at all, and, if so, under what conditions, and within what limits? Thus it sets out to undertake a "critique" of the power of "reason" to find out the truth about the nature of Reality. This type of idealism is most appropriately assigned to the branch of philosophy, called *Epistemology* or *Theory of Knowledge.* Kant's private metaphysical opinions were probably in favour of Spiritual Pluralism, but actually his three Critiques of Reason inspired his successors with the leading principles of Absolute Idealism.

PART I

SPIRITUAL PLURALISM

Chapter III

THE IDEALISM OF BERKELEY

1. DIFFICULTY OF DEFINING IDEALISM

In the last chapter we followed the varying fortunes of the term "idea." The original meaning of "idea," we found, was probably "visible form" or "appearance." This became generalised into "universal" or "essence." Next, because universals are apprehended by thought, idea came to mean "object of thought," and, thence, "object dependent on, and expressive of, thought." Lastly, developing along this track, idea ended by meaning, quite generally, any "object of which a mind is in any way aware."

At this point, we further found, the interest shifts from "idea" to "mind." For the "new way of ideas," propounded by Locke and others on the threshold of modern philosophy, developed ever more clearly and consciously into the exploration of "mind" or "experience" in the widest sense, or, what is in this context the same thing, into the exploration of the Universe so far as it is "idea," *i.e.*, so far as it reveals itself in any way in our experience, be this feeling, thought, or action; be it sense-perception, conception, or imagination; be it science, art, morality, or religion. The net result is that idealism is transformed from a theory of the Universe in terms of "ideas" into a theory of the Universe in terms of "mind," or "spirit," or "experience."

Of course, as we saw already at the end of the last chapter, even these terms admit of different interpretations and give rise to divergent lines of speculation. Hence, idealism in its development splits up into different types, according as each thinker selects, and emphasises, this aspect rather than that of their common tradition. Very largely this selective emphasis depends on the intellectual movements in the thinker's own time which he is either seeking to incorporate in his idealism or else to combat. Thus, Berkeley's idealism is a deliberate challenge to the materialism which Hobbes and others derived from contemporary physical science. The idealists of the latter half of the nineteenth century in England (E. Caird, F. H. Bradley, B. Bosanquet, and others) draw upon Kant, Fichte, Hegel for weapons with which to combat the empiricism of John Stuart Mill, the naturalism of Herbert Spencer, the positivism of Auguste Comte. The "neo-idealism," recently developed by Croce, Gentile and other Italian thinkers, is concerned to affirm the reality and fundamentality of spirit against the tendency of contemporary philosophical "realism" to belittle the significance of mind in the scheme of things. In general, modern idealism has proved itself to be an extraordinarily elastic and adaptable movement of thought, quickly responsive to changes in scientific theory, in social and moral experience, in religious life and theology. For all these affect minds, and the world of minds; and mind, in some sense, is the hero of every idealistic story.

We must look, then, among idealists for agreement in a common temper and a common direction of outlook rather than for agreement upon a set formula or upon hard-and-fast cardinal principles. That there is a general family likeness (so to speak) among the four types of idealism which we have distinguished is undeniable. They are all scions of the same stock. But to imprison them in a single formula, without thereby at once blurring the distinct individuality of each, is impossible. Idealists themselves have rarely attempted, and never with success, to give a general formula which should apply with equal truth to all the four different types. For, if such a formula is really general, its terms will inevitably be ambiguous, and the effort to eliminate the ambiguity will at once force us into distinguishing different meanings according to the different types of idealism to which they severally belong.[1] On the other hand, if the formula is precise and specific, it will turn out to fit one type to the exclusion of the others. It will be a definition, not of idealism in general, but only of the particular type of idealism which the author of the formula himself holds.

For the unhappy critics of idealism, this is, undeniably, a most inconvenient and perplexing situation. How are they effectively to attack and demolish a theory which has so many various shapes? No wonder that they have exercised their ingenuity in simplifying idealism into a single thesis by striking at which they might overthrow it once and for all. Let two examples, out of many, suffice. Bertrand Russell defines idealism as "the doctrine that whatever exists, or, at any rate, whatever can be known to exist, must be in some sense mental." [2] One of the chief American criticis of idealism, R. B. Perry, expresses what he regards as the "cardinal principle" of idealism in the form, "being is dependent on the knowing of it," or "to be is to be either knower or known." [1] A moment's consideration of these formulas shows that their immediate target is not idealism in general, nor even any one type of idealism, but the idealism of one particular thinker, viz., George Berkeley. Now, it is useless to fire at Berkeley, unless Berkeley is, in fact, the bull's-eye of the target of idealism. As such the critics unanimously treat him, notwithstanding the fact that many other idealists refuse to acknowledge themselves hit by any of the shafts aimed at Berkeley. Thus, Perry exerts himself explicitly to show that all later idealists, even when, like Kant and Hegel, they profess to differ from Berkeley, merely restate Berkeley's fundamental principle. Other critics proceed straightway as if by demolishing Berkeley they could deal the deathblow to all idealism whatever. Hence, we cannot do better than begin our study of idealism with Berkeley. For, even if later developments of idealism have left his theory far behind, he is, thanks to the critics, still the central figure in all attacks on idealism.

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[1] *Cf.*, here, what was said about the ambiguity of philosophical terms in Ch. i, § 7.

[2] See *Problems of Philosophy,* Ch. iv.

Moreover, quite apart from polemics, there are several other good reasons for studying Berkeley's idealism. First, he is, historically, the founder of modern idealism. Secondly, his denial of the existence of "matter" has become a byword and a popular gibe against idealists, as though Berkeley were compelled by his theory to believe that his own body did not exist. Did not Dr. Johnson, posing as the sturdy champion of common-sense, think to refute Berkeley by kicking a stone and succeed only in showing that he had not understood the theory which he was holding up to contempt? Thirdly, idealists themselves are divided in their estimate of Berkeley. Kant laboured to differentiate his own "critical" from Berkeley's "dogmatic" idealism. At the present day it is fashionable to accuse Berkeley of "subjective idealism" [1] and "mentalism," and many idealists, therefore, hasten to dissociate themselves from one tainted by these horrid vices. On the other hand, thinkers like Dr. J. McT. E. McTaggart hold that Berkeley's is the only genuine and satisfactory type of idealism, in so far as it is of the type of Spiritual Pluralism, whilst the Italian neo-idealists praise Berkeley for having recognised the central importance of spiritual activity, but criticise him for having failed to develop this insight to the full. And, lastly, it may not unfairly be averred that, as so often happens in controversy, Berkeley's position has been more freely expounded by friend and denounced by foe than patiently examined and understood by either. Thus, there are plenty of good reasons for our trying to gain a first grip upon idealism through a study of Berkeley.

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[1] See *Present Philosophical Tendencies*, Ch. vi.

2. THE ROOTS OF BERKELEY'S IDEALISM

The philosophy of Berkeley has three roots. They are: (1) the theology of the Christian religion; (2) the physics of Newton; (3) the philosophy of Descartes, Malebranche, and, more especially, that of Locke. The chief aim of the philosophical writings of his younger years, and more particularly of his *Principles of Human Knowledge* (1710), is to devise a theory of the Universe which shall retain all that is empirically well-founded in physical science, whilst substituting "God" for "matter" as the principle of explanation even for the physical world. It is too often overlooked that Berkeley's idealism is hardly less a philosophy of science than it is a philosophical defence of speculative theology. If he claims to have found a new, simple, and convincing proof of the existence of God, he is no less entitled to claim that he is offering a new and illuminating view of Nature. Indeed, the value and originality of Berkeley's theory of Nature are being revealed to us in a fresh light at the present day by such work on the foundations of natural science as A. N. Whitehead's analysis of Nature as "what we perceive by the senses." It is well to bear this in mind as a corrective of the oft-repeated criticism that Berkeley's idealism is inimical to, and incompatible with, physical science. It is well, too, not to forget that Berkeley was sufficiently abreast of the mathematics of his day for his criticisms of the "theory of fluxions," as the Calculus was then called, to arouse a controversy among mathematicians which lasted for more than a quarter of a century, and helped to clear up the theoretical foundations on which the Calculus rests.

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[1] See below in this chapter, p. 94.

3. BERKELEY AS A SPIRITUAL PLURALIST

If Berkeley is called an "idealist," it is generally for one, or all, of three reasons, viz., (1) because he affirms that the objects which we perceive by the senses exist only when and so long as a mind perceives them—this is his famous *esse est percipi* principle; (2) because he denies the existence of "matter"; (3) because he regards the Universe as a Society of Spirits dependent upon the Supreme Spirit, God.

Of these three theses, the last is undoubtedly the one which lay nearest to Berkeley's heart. His book on the

Principles of Human Knowledge was written, in his own words, with the express design "to demonstrate the existence and attributes of God, the immortality of the soul, the reconciliation of God's foreknowledge and the freedom of man; and by showing the emptiness and falsehood of several parts of the speculative sciences, to induce men to the study of religion and things useful." And in *Siris,* the work of his old age, whilst dropping his other idealist theses practically out of sight, he mounts from a recipe for tar-water as the panacea for all human ills to the vision of God as the pervading spirit manifesting Himself in all Nature. First and last, then, Berkeley's idealism is oriented towards God as the spirit who through Nature reveals and communicates Himself to us human spirits. If Berkeley denies the existence of matter, it is solely in order to make room for God. He is, first and last, a loyal churchman, defending orthodox theism—not without unorthodox arguments—against contemporary "atheism," and, in his moral writings, the standards of conventional virtue against the licentiousness born of "materialism."

Looked at from this angle, Berkeley neither is, nor aspires to be, original. He is merely upholding the moral and religious tradition which is the common heritage of Christendom.

We shall get a step nearer to his philosophical importance if we leave aside, for the moment, the religious associations of the term "God" and ask ourselves simply: What sort of picture of the Universe does Berkeley put before us? Of what kinds of beings does he conceive the Universe to be made up? The answer is, briefly, that the Universe is made up of "minds," or "spirits," and their relations to each other. It is a society of spirits with a

Supreme Spirit at its head. If we want a technical label for this sort of theory, we must call it "Spiritual Pluralism," because it affirms that, in last analysis, the Universe is a plurality of spirits communicating with each other. Orthodox theism, when transposed from the terms of theology into the terms of metaphysics, always reduces to the general type of Spiritual Pluralism. The social intercourse between men, and the hierarchical order of human society, furnish the model, or pattern, on which all Spiritual Pluralism is constructed. A society of spirits is, so to speak, the logical skeleton upon which Christian theology is found to be constructed when we strip off all specifically religious covering.

As a spiritual pluralist Berkeley is the forerunner of a long line of "idealists," and to many a thinker at the present day the very core and essence of idealism is this concept of the world as a society of spirits. On the other hand, the stream of idealism has been fed from many springs, and there are, as we shall see, idealists who are Spiritual "Monists," and who, rejecting social analogies as inadequate, interpret the Universe, including the individual human minds in it, as the manifestation of a single spiritual force or principle, variously characterised as Will (Schopenhauer), The Unconscious (von Hartmann), the *Élan Vital* (Bergson). In yet a different way, as we shall see, does Absolute Idealism dissent from Spiritual Pluralism.

4. THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN MENTAL ACT AND OBJECT OR "IDEA"

However, Spiritual Pluralism, as such, is far from being Berkeley's most original contribution to philosophy.

Indeed, he can hardly be said to have explored the many interesting speculative problems which it involves, or to have thought it out in detail as Leibniz did independently of him and before him, and as others have done since (*e.g.* Lotze, McTaggart, James Ward). We come nearer to the heart of Berkeley's originality when we ask ourselves the question: What is, and does, a spirit? Berkeley's answer is: A spirit is "something which knows or perceives"—an *active* being. The term "activity" derives for Berkeley its whole meaning from what we do when we apprehend an object. From perceiving, remembering, imagining,—above all from perceiving—we know by immediate experience what it is to be active. And there is no other kind of activity than this, so far as the evidence of our experience goes. Mere movement or change in physical bodies is, consequently, not activity, and our use of the active and passive tenses of verbs for describing physical events is, taken literally, a mistake and a fruitful begetter of metaphysical illusions.

The nature, then, of spirit is to be active, and all activity is mental activity. That Berkeley should have singled out *perceiving* as the chief type of mental activity gives a certain one-sided narrowness to his theory. For even if, somewhat doubtfully, we stretch the meaning of perceiving so as to include thinking, inferring, reasoning, the neglect of feeling and willing shuts out whole provinces of the life of mind from receiving adequate philosophical analysis at Berkeley's hands.

On the other hand, the emphasis on spirit as perceiving involves two consequences of the utmost importance for the development of Berkeley's thought. One consequence is his sharp distinction between the *act* of perceiving and the *object* of perception. The other is his preoccupation with *Nature* as the totality of objects which we perceive by our senses.

The distinction between act and object will seem almost painfully obvious. Plain commonsense appears to demand it. For, is it not implied whenever anyone says: "I see, hear, think, etc., something"? There is the seeing (act) and what is seen (object); the hearing and the sounds heard; the thinking and what is thought. In the next chapter, we shall discover that this innocent-looking distinction is, in fact, far less simple and obvious than it seems. Here, we need note only that Berkeley, following the usage of Locke and all other thinkers of the time, calls every object an "idea." Hence, the distinction between *object* and *act* is, in his language, the distinction between *idea* and *act*. It follows that an "act" can never be an "idea." I can never perceive an act of my mind, and therefore I can never perceive my own mind, as I perceive an "idea," *e.g.*, a coloured shape or a sound. Berkeley emphatically denies that we can have an "idea" of mind or spirit, *i.e.*, perceive mind or spirit as one object among others. If he merely meant by this denial that one's own mind and its acts cannot be objects of sense-perception, we might readily accept his view. But, apparently, he meant, at any rate at first, that a mind cannot become an object at all. Taken literally, this would amount to a denial of all self-observation and self-knowledge, and might well provoke the rejoinder: "If mind and its acts can never be objects, how is it that we can think and talk of them, as Berkeley does himself?" That Berkeley did not intend to maintain the extreme view which would invite this criticism, is evidenced by the fact that, in the second edition of his *Principles,* he admits, not indeed an "idea," but at least a "notion," of mind. "I have," he writes, "some knowledge or notion of *my mind,* and its acts about ideas; inasmuch as I know or understand what is meant by these words."[1] Of course, the introduction of the word "notion" for the word "idea" hardly solves the problem. It is merely a verbal invitation to attend to the difference between knowledge of *objects* and knowledge of *acts,* without telling us what the difference is. But with his curious modernity, Berkeley has here touched on a point which is still an open problem to present-day psychologists and philosophers.

5. TO BE IS TO BE PERCEIVED

From acts we must pass on to objects (or "ideas"), and thereby to Berkeley's most famous, and most paradoxical, doctrine, viz., the doctrine that the objects which we perceive exist only when and so long as a mind perceives them: to be is to be perceived. It follows that, if an object which I am now perceiving is to be thought of by me as still existing when I no longer perceive it, I must suppose some other mind (or minds) to be perceiving the object at all times when I do not perceive it. Now, obviously, no single human mind, nor even all human minds together, perceive the whole of Nature at any time. Hence, Nature as a whole must exist as the object of perception for the eternal, all-inclusive mind which is God.

It is most important to examine precisely what Berkeley means by this *esse est percipi* principle, because it is a principle which has been far more often criticised than accurately understood.

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[1] *Principles of Human Knowledge,* § 142.

The non-philosophical reader will be assisted in following the inevitably somewhat technical discussion of this principle, if he prepares himself by a few simple reflections.

Everyday speech permits us to say equally that we see a table and that we see a brown patch of colour; that we hear a bell and that we hear a sound; that we smell a rose and that we smell an odour. In general, the "objects" which we perceive are named either as concrete, physical *things*, like tables, bells, roses, or they are named as colours, sounds, tastes, smells, temperatures, etc.

Further, these latter objects—"sense-data" as they are called by many present-day philosophers—are, in ordinary speech and thought, treated as *qualities* of the concrete things. We say the table is brown, the bell is loud, the rose has a sweet smell, etc. Thus, the grammar of our language implies a metaphysical theory, viz., that the world consists of individual "things," each of which possesses "qualities." In technical terms, the world is composed of "substances" in which "qualities" are said to "inhere."

We have, then, two sorts of "objects" of perception—sense-data and concrete things. We interpret the former as qualities of the latter, and say that we perceive the latter by perceiving the former: we perceive things by perceiving their qualities. For no quality, so it is thought, can exist by itself: it requires a thing "of" which it is the quality—a substance in which it inheres.

With the help of these reflections, we are in a position to appreciate just what Berkeley means by his *esse est percipi* principle, and just what is the effect of it.

The colours, sounds, and other qualities of things Berk-

Spirit = is the cause of the idea. One idea cannot cause another eley sums up in the general term "ideas of sense." "Idea" is here used exactly as, in the last chapter, we had found Locke use it, viz., as a technical term for any *object* apprehended by a mind. Hence, to call colours and other sense-data "ideas of sense" is, for Berkeley, the same as to call them "objects perceived by a mind."

Now, it is to *these* objects primarily that Berkeley applies the *esse est percipi* principle, and we shall all realise at once that it is not nearly as paradoxical to say of colours, sounds, odours, etc., that they exist only when they are seen, heard, smelt, etc., as it is to say this of tables, mountains, plants, animals, and other concrete "bodies." In fact, there is a variety of more or less plausible and familiar arguments for the view that sense-data are, in their nature and existence, more or less mind-dependent.

But what, then, becomes of concrete things, or "bodies," if their supposed qualities exist only when perceived? It is here that we come upon what is really revolutionary in Berkeley's thought. He treats a thing as nothing but a "collection" of ideas of sense, which collection is marked off from other collections of ideas by a distinctive name. In other words, he challenges and denies the concepts of substance. quality, inherence. A "thing" for him is not a substantial Somewhat which owns qualities. It is merely a recurrent group of certain colours, tastes, smells, etc. This is truly startling doctrine. It sweeps aside the familiar metaphysics of everyday speech and thought, and substitutes an altogether strange and novel interpretation of the objects of perception. There are colours, but no colour*ed* things. There are temperatures, but nothing of which we can strictly say that *it* is hot or cold. If Berkeley is right, our ordinary language about things is utterly misleading. We have, truly, a situation in which, in his own words, "we ought to think with the learned, and speak with the vulgar." Considering how subversive this new doctrine is, it is remarkable that Berkeley should not have emphasised it more. It is hardly mentioned again, after having been introduced, almost casually, in the very first paragraph of his *Principles.* "As several of these [ideas of sense] are observed to accompany each other, they come to be marked by one name, and so to be reputed as one *thing.* Thus, for example, a certain colour, taste, smell, figure and consistence, having been observed to go together, are accounted one distinct thing, signified by the name apple; other collections of ideas constitute a stone, a tree, a book, and the like sensible things."

It is thus clear that we have two quite distinct applications of the *esse est percipi* principle to deal with. The first application is to "ideas of sense," *i.e.,* to colours, tastes, smells, etc. The second is to ordinary "things," on the ground that they are nothing but collections of ideas of sense. Clearly, whether the first application is right or wrong, the second raises an altogether fresh issue. Is a "thing" to be conceived as a substance with qualities? Or is it a mere collection of sense-data? Few critics of the principle have been careful enough to observe that two distinct theories have to be examined. But it is worth remarking, as illustrating the modernity of Berkeley's thought, that his treatment of "things" has been revived in our own day in the more refined form of Bertrand Russell's theory of a thing as a "class," or "logical construct," of sense-data. At any rate, the effect of Berkeley's theory is to eliminate from our thinking, if not from our grammar, the concept of substance and quality. And if it be objected that colours, smells, etc., surely cannot exist by themselves, but must belong to something as its qualities, Berkeley's reply is that they exist, not by inhering in a substance, but by being objects for a perceiving mind. In short, Berkeley's theory amounts to substituting in the interpretation of the data of sense-perception the concept "object-for-a-mind" for the concept "quality-inhering-in-substance."

This change, no doubt, makes a profound difference in the way we think about what we perceive, but it makes none in what we actually perceive. To this extent Berkeley is undeniably right in his reiterated contention that his theory does not deny the existence of anything which we actually observe by our senses to exist. It only explains what that existence consists in, viz., in being perceived by a mind, and, in doing so, it substitutes a relationship which is intelligible, and which we can verify in every moment of experience, for one which is both unverifiable and unintelligible. For how can, *e.g.* a colour exist by inhering in an unthinking substance? Or who, if qualities are all that we perceive, has ever perceived a substance or the relation of inherence? In short, nothing which we actually perceive to exist is by Berkeley's theory declared to be non-existent. Only a new interpretation of the manner of its existence is substituted for the traditional one. To say that colours and sounds, and even houses and mountains, exist only as "ideas" or objects of perception is strange, and may be untrue, but it is certainly not the same thing as to say that they do not exist at all—which is what Berkeley is commonly accused of saying. It is not even true that on Berkeley's theory it is impossible to distinguish between objects which are "real" and objects which are "imaginary." He has definite tests for discriminating between the real and the unreal—real objects are not dependent on my will; they are more vivid than those of dream and imagination; they exhibit a superior coherence and order, permitting us to formulate "laws of Nature." These tests are, no doubt, purely pragmatic. That is to say, they work well on the whole, but they are neither infallible in practice nor demonstrable beyond all theoretical doubt. But then no other theory is in any better case.

One more point requires to be emphasised in the face of traditional misunderstandings. An "idea" for Berkeley is an *object* of the perceiving mind: it is not a *state* or *process* of that mind. It is, therefore, not true that Berkeley's theory is "subjective idealism," at least if by that term is meant the theory that each mind perceives nothing but its own mental states. True, Berkeley's language is occasionally careless. He uses "sensation," at times, as a synonym for "idea of sense," and this is misleading for us who are accustomed by psychology to use both "sensation" and "idea" for states of mind. And he speaks of an idea being "in" the mind when all he means is that an object is being perceived. But when he actually faces the question whether ideas are states of mind, his answer is emphatically in the negative: "those qualities are in the mind only as they are perceived by it; that is, not by way of *mode* or attribute [Berkeley's terms for "state"], but only by way of *idea* [*i.e.,* object]." [1]

6. BERKELEY'S DENIAL OF THE EXISTENCE OF "MATTER"

And now we are ready to consider Berkeley's denial of the existence of "matter." This is not, we now know, a denial of the existence of what we ordinarily call physical things. These exist just as, and when, we perceive them. What, then, does Berkeley deny when he denies the existence of "matter"? He denies the truth of a familiar theory concerning the *causes* of the objects (ideas) we perceive. This is the theory, already mentioned in the previous chapter,[1] according to which what we perceive are impressions or sensations produced in our minds by the action upon them of material objects. We perceive the effect, viz., sensations (which are, therefore, truly mental states); we infer the cause, viz., matter. It is this *theory*, and nothing else, that Berkeley is denying. And his denial here, as always, is based on an appeal to experience. If the effects produced in our minds are all we ever do, or can, perceive, then the supposed cause is an imperceptible, unknowable Somewhat. All attempts to determine its nature are otiose guesswork. Moreover, "how Matter should operate on a spirit, or produce any idea in it, is what no philosopher will pretend to explain; it is therefore evident there can be no use of Matter in natural philosophy." [2] Of course, the objects we perceive, not being of our own making, have their cause, but that cause, for Berkeley, is God, and Nature is the "visual language" through which He reveals His power and goodness to us. Thus, what Berkeley rejects is the familiar causal theory of perception which tries to tell us what the material object does to the perceiving mind. To deny the existence of matter is, for Berkeley, to deny the *theory* that the colours, sounds, etc., which we perceive, are mental states, and that these states are the effects produced in our minds by material objects, themselves unperceived and imperceptible. For him, what we perceive are real objects, and their cause (producing agent) is God.

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[1] See *Principles of Human Knowledge,* § 49.

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[1] See Ch. ii, § 7.

[2] *Op. cit.*, § 50.

7. TWO MEANINGS OF "CAUSALITY"

In the treatment of causation once more there appears Berkeley's astonishing modernity. He distinguishes, in effect, two senses of causation. In the strict and proper sense of "efficient cause," only a spirit can be a cause. Causation, in fact, is one with the will which makes things happen. That is the only empirical meaning we can give to the verb "to cause"; that is the only way in which we experience causation in ourselves. By contrast, ideas, *i.e.*, objects, are, as Berkeley quaintly puts it, "visibly inactive . . . so that one idea or object of thought cannot produce or make any alteration in another."[1] Over against this strict sense of causation as *spiritual agency*, we have the scientific sense of it as the *correlation of events according to law*, to use present-day terminology. Berkeley's way of expressing the same thing is to speak of "general rules" for the explanation of particular effects, which rules are "grounded on the analogy and uniformness observed in the production of natural effects." More characteristic still is the passage in which he says that "the connection of ideas [objects of perception] does not imply the relation of *cause* and *effect*, but only of a mark or *sign* with the thing *signified*."[2] In other words, natural science deals with Nature, as the totality of what we perceive by the senses, in abstraction from the spiritual power which creates and sustains it, and it seeks only to formulate rules or laws permitting us to infer from the occurrence of one event (the sign, or "cause," popularly so called) the occurrence of another event (the thing signified, or "effect"). Such rules, however, are but evidence of the wisdom and benevolence of God, who has established laws of Nature in order that we may learn by experience "that such and such ideas are attended with such and such other ideas," and steer our life's course accordingly. Thus, whilst the ultimate philosophical explanation of Nature is, for Berkeley, to be sought in God and God's creative activity, scientists are left free by his theory of Nature to restrict themselves to proximate explanations in terms of whatever laws of the correlations of sensible events they can discover by induction from the observation of these events themselves.

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[1] See *Principles of Human Knowledge,* § 25.

[2] *Op. cit.,* §§ 62-65.

8. BERKELEY'S PHILOSOPHY OF NATURAL SCIENCE

In short, when we reflect upon Berkeley's denial that the data of perception are mental states caused by material objects, and on his analysis of causality in science as the correlation of events according to law, we see that his whole philosophy of natural science rests on two principles. The first of these is stated in the sections of his *Principles* which are specially devoted to the discussion of the bearings of his idealism on physics and (applied) mathematics. There his one aim is to hold natural science to its proper business of dealing with the actual data of perception. He is relentless in urging upon science to remember its empirical foundations, and to avoid theories which substitute speculations about imperceptible entities for the study of the laws of perceptible events. The second is that the splitting up of Nature, *i.e.*, of what we perceive by the senses, into mental effects and material causes is both bad science and bad metaphysics. For, it makes "matter" the ultimate reality at the same time that it cuts off every way of knowing what matter is or whether it exists at all. Now, it cannot honestly be said that either principle makes the work of physical science impossible, or that there is anything in Berkeley's idealism, as we have above analysed it, which is incompatible with science, once the abstract standpoint of science has been properly understood. On the contrary, in so far as Berkeley rejects the theory that colours, sounds, etc., do not belong to "Nature," but are merely impressions in our minds, he renders an inestimable service to science by ridding it of an error which would condemn all its work to futility. For, if the data of perception which are, after all, the scientist's sole evidence, are nothing but mental impressions, then science is inevitably cut off from the physical world. Berkeley, by boldly identifying Nature with the totality of what we perceive by the senses, restores colours, sounds, and all other sense-data to the context of Nature as *bona fide* natural phenomena, subject to natural laws. He restores to science its true object —the real world which we perceive. In this he has the support of the best present-day work on the scientific theory of Nature, *e.g.*, in A. N. Whitehead's writings.

9. GOD

Science, however, is not philosophy, for science deals only with objects (ideas) and their relations, in abstraction from minds and their acts of perceiving. As soon as by reflection we undo this abstraction, some physical objects, viz., human bodies, are seen to manifest minds or spirits, like our own, and Nature as a whole is seen to be the "visual language" of God. The Universe is now revealed to us as a society of spirits under God.

And so God is the copingstone of Berkeley's philosophy. Indeed, in the *Second Dialogue between Hylas and Philonous*, Berkeley explicitly employs the *esse est percipi* principle for a "direct and immediate demonstration" of the existence of a God from "the bare existence of the sensible world," as follows: "Sensible things do really exist; and, if they really exist, they are necessarily perceived by an infinite Mind: therefore there is an infinite Mind, or God." Alongside of this argument Berkeley, as we have mentioned in passing, employs also the argument from design, inferring the "workmanship of God" from the "beauty and usefulness of the several parts of the creation." But the above argument is his original contribution to a philosophical theology.

10. SUMMARY

N. B.

In the next chapter we shall attempt to examine, systematically and on their merits, the several elements of idealistic doctrine which Berkeley has here launched upon the world. In preparation for this task we may conveniently here draw together what we have found these elements to be:

1. The *esse est percipi* principle, as applied to sense-data and to things as collections of sense-data.
2. The concept of mind (or spirit) as *act* in distinction from object.

3. The concept of the Universe as a *society of minds or spirits.*
4. The central position assigned to *God.*

After this examination of the Berkeleyan type of idealism, we shall be in a position to appreciate some of the alternative ways in which other idealists have developed the common theme of all idealism, viz., that mind is the clue to the nature of Reality.

Chapter IV

DEVELOPMENTS AND CRITICISMS OF BERKELEY'S IDEALISM

1. (i) ACT *v.* OBJECT—(a) THEORIES OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEM

Each of the four specifically "idealistic" doctrines which, in the last chapter, we had distinguished in the texture of Berkeley's philosophy, deserves to be examined on its merits, as these are revealed alike by the developments which they have undergone since Berkeley's time and by the criticisms to which they have been exposed.

(1) First, then, let us begin with Berkeley's distinction between mental *acts* and the *objects* ("ideas") upon which they are directed. Just as for an object to be is to be perceived, so for a mind to be is to perceive; or, generally, to be active. And, certainly, it would seem that no mind can perceive, or be active in any other way, without objects. Every act of apprehension or will implies something which is apprehended or willed.

Nothing, on the face of it, could be simpler or more obvious than this distinction. Yet it raises many curious and difficult problems, and some of the various solutions propounded for these problems lead far away from Berkeley's position, not only into other forms of idealism but even into philosophical theories which are no longer idealistic at all.

(a) One of these problems, as we saw above, was noted by Berkeley himself, though he did no more than touch the fringe of it. This is the problem how we are aware of our acts as distinct from their objects. We are aware of objects in virtue of our acts of apprehension. But how are we aware of the acts themselves? Yet, surely we must experience them in some way, for how, else, could we talk of them and distinguish them from their objects? When I say, *e.g.*, that I see a colour, I hear a sound, I think something, I am sure of the colour, the sound, the object of thought—they loom large before my mind, filling the field of consciousness. Where, over and above them, are the acts? How am I aware of them? And, if to be aware of an object requires an appropriate mental act, must we not postulate correspondingly a second act for becoming aware of the first act, a third act for the second, and so on *in infinitum?*

Berkeley's own attempt to grapple with the difficulty does not, as we saw, carry us far. He is right in recognising that there is a difference, not only between act and object, but also between the experience of an act and the experience of an object. But to express this difference by saying that we have a "notion" of the act whereas the object is an "idea," does not carry us further. However, if Berkeley failed, it is hard to say who has succeeded better. For, the problem is still with us at the present day.

Let the reader who wishes to appreciate for himself the point of the problem, and the plausibility of the various solutions propounded, consider such a familiar experience as listening to a sound. "I hear a sound," he will say. Now, the constituent of his experience to which the words "a sound" refer is easily identified. The question is, What in his experience is expressed by the words "I hear," and, in general, by the personal pronoun and the verb? The appeal is to "introspection": is there any factor in the total experience of hearing-a-sound which can be identified as "hearing" (let alone as "I"), over and above the sound? Sometimes at night we wake up thinking we have heard a sound. We lie in bed in the darkness and the silence, listening intently—"straining our ears"—for the sound. What is this listening? How do we experience this mental act? Quite truly we are sensible of a "strain." The eyes stare fixedly; the body is kept rigidly still. If we could prick our ears we would do so. Even as it is, we experience sense-data which seem to come from the muscles of the ears. Does this feel of our bodily adjustments constitute the act, or is there some purely mental listening over and above all these sense-data?

If there is such an act—and the argument applies quite generally to all kinds of experience in which minds apprehend objects—should we, perhaps, credit it with a peculiar quality of *transparency?* We owe this suggestion to a "realist," Dr. G. E. Moore, who, like many realists, agrees with Berkeley on the distinction of act and object. On this view, then, the act is hard to observe because it is, as it were, diaphanous, its sole function being to present the object to us. This transparency of the act would be what Berkeley means when he says that the act cannot become an "idea," *i.e.*, that it cannot be objectified.

Another, and perhaps better, way of expressing this is to say that the act of perceiving is *felt* rather than experienced as an object; or that the mind *is* such acts of perceiving, thinking, etc.; or that it *lives* at each moment in such acts. A mind is not something distinguishable from what we call "its" acts: it is a tissue and sequence of acts and exists only in and through them. As act, a mind apprehends an object, but just because a mind is such acts of apprehending, these acts are not themselves apprehended as objects. One of the foremost realist thinkers, Professor Samuel Alexander, has coined a new terminology for describing this situation. Objects, so he proposes to say, are "contemplated," but the acts by which they are contemplated are themselves "enjoyed." Clearly, Alexander's "enjoying" an act is the equivalent of Berkeley's "having a notion" of it. But Alexander's term is the happier, in that "enjoying" an act brings out better that non-objectifying awareness which, above, we tried to describe by saying that the act is felt, or that we live in, or are, the acts in virtue of which objects are "before" us. In the same sense, some thinkers speak of "immediate experience," where "immediate" means the non-objectified part, or factor, in experience.

Over against all these ways of defending the existence of mental acts, we have a group of theories which deny that there is any act or agent at all. Accepting Berkeley's appeal to experience, they deny that within any experience there is discoverable, by introspection or analysis, either an act of perceiving or a mind, spirit, self (the terms are used as synonyms by Berkeley) which perceives. The type of all such theories is that of Berkeley's successor, David Hume, who declares that, instead of activity and self, or spirit, he can find only a bundle of ever-changing sense-impressions, memory-images, feelings, composing kaleidoscopic patterns in the field of consciousness. In short, Hume's analysis of experience rejects the distinction of acts and ideas, and, cancelling out the acts, leaves only a tissue, or flux, of ideas. Even so great a psychologist as William James may be quoted on this side. For in his *Essays in Radical Empiricism*, he declares that in trying to discover what thinking is, *i.e.*, to identify what features in our experience the term "thinking" means, we can find nothing, over and above the objects of thought, but a mass of sense-data, due more especially to *breathing*. To think = to breathe!

The most recent variant of this type of theory is that of certain American neo-realists who, following up James's hint, affirm, quite generally, that there is no such thing as mental activity, and that the only activity involved in perceiving, thinking, etc., is physiological response to environmental stimuli, and that the only agent is the body, the living organism.

There the matter stands at the present day, at any rate so far as it turns on introspective evidence. If anyone naïvely thought that Berkeley expressed nothing but a plain fact of experience when he distinguished act and object, this array of mutually contradictory theories will disillusion him. Meanwhile, it is worth noting how this controversy cuts right across all boundary-lines between philosophical systems. Idealist opposes idealist, realist opposes realist. F. H. Bradley has no use for the concept of activity in psychology; James Ward regards the subject, or "experient," and its activities as fundamental. Yet both are classed as idealists. English realists, like G. E. Moore and S. Alexander, treat the analysis of experience into mental act and object as fundamental, but then go on to argue against Berkeley that the object exists in its own right, and does not need to be perceived in order to exist. The American neo-realists agree in rejecting the *esse est percipi* principle, but insist that the activity to be distinguished from objects is physical, not mental. These few samples, out of many, must suffice to show what a curiously perplexing problem Berkeley has raised by his seemingly innocent distinction of act and idea.

So far our discussion has followed the track of asking what the term "activity," as applied to minds, means; and since the term must express something that we experience, the question became how we experience mental activity, and whether we experience any such thing at all.

2. (i) ACT *v.* OBJECT—(b) MENTAL ACTIVITY AS A METAPHYSICAL PRINCIPLE

(b) But this is by no means the only direction in which philosophical speculation has followed the clue of mental activity. A great many thinkers, so far from enquiring into the empirical evidence for this activity, have rather taken mental activity for granted as a fact, not only familiar, but self-evident and not further analysable. And they have then gone on at once to treat it as fundamental and as *the* clue to the nature of the Universe as a whole. Thus, even before Berkeley, Leibniz had come to hold that whatever is real must be active as we know ourselves to be active. In other words, everything which is real must, in its own kind and degree, be the sort of thing which we know ourselves as minds, or spirits, to be. This line of thought led Leibniz to develop Spiritual Pluralism far beyond the point at which Berkeley (who was not acquainted with Leibniz's work) stopped. And many later thinkers, down to James Ward and McTaggart in our own day, have followed along this path.[1] Other thinkers, again, have given to the argument a "monistic" turn, by regarding the activity of our own minds as, so to speak, a pulse of a single, cosmic activity which manifests itself in all that exists. The existence of a multiplicity of individuals is only an appearance: at bottom, the same cosmic activity or energy expresses itself in all. Many are the theories of this type, from Schopenhauer's *Will* to Bergson's *Élan Vital.*[2] Yet again, there are those who emphasise the *creative* character of this cosmic spiritual activity, from Fichte's theory that the world-spirit "posits" an object-world in order to have an "Other" to overcome and make one again with itself, to Bergson's creative evolution, and the *atto puro* of the Italian neo-idealists. The question, too, which kind of mental activity in ourselves is most typical of the character of the cosmic activity has been variously answered, and where Schopenhauer takes Will as the type, others have taken Reason or Thought, and some at the present day, like E. D. Fawcett, favour Imagination. Carlyle caught murmurs of this debate, as it was going on in his own time, and echoed them vaguely in his declaration that the Universe is "a sum total of Actions and Activities."

3. (i) ACTS *v.* OBJECT—(c) DUALITY OF SUBJECT AND OBJECT

(c) A third line of thought, instead of thus magnifying spiritual activity at the expense of the object-world, starts from the fact that act and object, if distinct, are yet also manifestly related. An act without an object seems hardly conceivable. It would be a mere fragment of a concrete experience, and, in fact, there is no experience in which act and object are not found in closest correlation. From such considerations as these spring all those forms of idealism for which the subject-object relation, the "duality of subject and object in experience," is the fundamental fact. Subject and object are, as it were, the two poles of all spiritual activity. Standing at the subjective pole, we can distinguish minds according to the object-worlds with which they are occupied, *e.g.*, the scientific, the artistic, the religious mind; and we can rank minds according to the completeness of the grasp of each upon its world, as when we say that X. is a greater scientist than Y. Standing at the objective pole, we can dwell on the "abstraction" involved in taking the object apart from its relation to the subject, and try to show that only as entering into the life of mind does it exhibit its full nature. And, of course, this correlation-view of subject and object also lends itself to the formulation of those "high tension" forms of spiritual experience in which the subject, overcoming the opposition between itself and the object, finds itself in the object and becomes one with it.

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[1] See Ch. v.

[2] See Part II, Ch. vi.

4. (i) ACT *v.* OBJECT—(d) KANT'S THEORY OF ACT AS JUDGMENT

(d) But even this is not yet the end. For there is still the Kantian treatment of activity. The great advance, as we shall see more fully later on,[1] which Kant makes on Berkeley, is that he does not simply accept mental activity as a fact, but seeks to analyse the universal principles inherent in it. It is Kant who first identified mental activity, in its cognitive aspect, with *judgment,* recognized judgment as synthetic, and attempted to distinguish the principles of synthesis ("categories") inherent in judgment. It is Kant, similarly, who seeks to formulate the universal principles involved in moral conduct and in æsthetic enjoyment as mental activities. But to this point we shall return.

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[1] See Part III, Ch. vii.

5. (ii) PROOFS OF THE *esse est percipi* PRINCIPLE—(a) WHAT IS MEANT BY "TO EXIST"?

(ii) From the problem of mental activity, the reader will turn, probably with a sigh of relief, to the problem of *esse est percipi.* But, alas, there is here little relief for him, for this problem again hides beneath an apparent simplicity a large amount of technical complexity.

(a) Berkeley, fully alive to the paradox which the *esse est percipi* principle presents to unsophisticated common-sense, exerts all his ingenuity and argumentative skill to make the principle plausible. He offers, in consequence, a great variety of arguments in support of it, and many of these are stated in several different ways. Thus, *e.g.*, like a good debater, he tries to catch his opponents by their own arguments. Are they not saying that colours, sounds, and sense-data in general, are nothing but "impressions" in our minds, caused by material objects? If so, this is to admit the principle for sense-data. For impressions can exist only when perceived. If the opponent replies, "But there is the material object which causes the impression," and goes on to ascribe to that object shape, solidity, weight, etc., Berkeley counters by pointing out that these qualities, too, are but objects of perception and, as such, fall under his principle. And he replies, further, by reminding his opponent that a mind restricted to impressions can never directly perceive either the alleged material object or the way in which impressions are caused. Hence, the whole causal theory of perception is an unverifiable and unnecessary hypothesis. In other passages, Berkeley appeals to the "relativity" of sense-data, *i.e.*, to such facts as that the same water may feel cold to one hand, warm to another; that a square tower may look round at a distance; a large object appear small, etc. But the relevance of this latter argument for Berkeley's purpose is, to say the least, disputable, and, anyhow, these are not the arguments to which he himself, in the *Principles of Human Knowledge*, attaches the greatest weight. No, Berkeley's most important arguments are two, each of which requires us to make an experiment in thinking, an "easy trial." First, he asks us to "attend to what is meant by the term *exist* when applied to sensible things." Secondly, he asks us to try whether we can, without contradiction, suppose a sensible thing to exist unperceived.

It is important to observe how explicitly Berkeley limits his arguments to "sensible things," *i.e.*, to what we have agreed to call "sense-data," and to those "collections" of sense-data which are ordinarily called "things." Thus, "there was an odour, that is, it was smelt; there was a sound, that is, it was heard; a colour or figure, and it was perceived by sight or touch." Again, "the table I write on I say exists; that is, I see and feel it: and if I were out of my study I should say it existed, meaning thereby that if I was in my study I might perceive it, or that some other spirit actually does perceive it." [1] Mere reflection on this situation yields, so Berkeley claims, the "intuitive knowledge" that "to exist" and "to be perceived" are synonymous. They mean the same fact. Is this convincing? True, if for simplicity's sake we leave hallucinations and dreams out of account, we shall all agree that what we perceive exists as we perceive it. The sounds we hear are existing sounds; to see a colour is to see an existing colour, and similarly for other sense-data. But when we say that the sounds we hear exist, we mean, surely, something more than the idle tautology that the sounds we hear are sounds we hear. Perceiving, in short, gives us evidence that what we perceive exists. But does it prove that to exist is the same as to be perceived? So, again, it is true that when we think of something as existing which we are not now actually perceiving, like the table in the study we have just left, we think of it as something which we should perceive if we went back. We expect to perceive it: but does this prove that the object's existence is one with being perceived, and that, if it is not now perceived by any mind, it is non-existent? Consider the sarcophagus of Tutankhamen before it was actually seen by the excavators. As the exploration of the tomb progressed, the existence of the sarcophagus became increasingly probable, and the excavators had good reason to expect that they would see it on opening the last of the shrines. Moreover, until it was actually seen, and its existence thereby established beyond doubt, there was always a possibility that the shrines might be found empty. Common-sense here appears clearly to distinguish between existing and being seen. Of course, Berkeley could always save himself by saying that on his view, too, the sarcophagus existed before it was discovered, because it was all the time perceived by God. But the appeal to God presupposes that the identity of existing and being perceived has been established. Whereas the point of our argument has been to draw attention to situations in which we appear to discern "intuitively" that, whilst an object must exist in order to be perceived, its existence is not simply identical with its being perceived. Realists have opposed to Berkeley the principle: to be is one thing, to be perceived is another. The latter implies the former: a thing must be in order to be perceived. But the former does not imply the latter: a thing, in order to be, does not need to be perceived.

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[1] Both these passages come from § 3 of the *Principles of Human Knowledge.*

It does not seem, so far, as if a conclusive choice between these rival views were possible. One may look at colours or listen to sounds *ad nauseam*, without finding that "intuition" brings one any nearer to a decisive answer to the question, whether "to exist," for sense-data, does or does not *mean* "to be perceived."

Perhaps, however, the deadlock may be broken by looking at the situation from another angle. Even if "to exist" does not mean "to be perceived," it might still be the case that the one is never found without the other; nay, that it is impossible for the one to occur without the other. We should not, then, be entitled to say that "being" is *identical* with "being perceived," but we should be entitled to say that "being" and "being perceived" are invariably and necessarily *connected*. And this interpretation of the *esse est percipi* principle would serve Berkeley's purpose just as well as the other.

Now, it is true that the only sense-data of the existence of which we have direct knowledge are the sense-data which we actually perceive. We may infer that under stated conditions we shall perceive sense-data which we do not now perceive (as when astronomers months in advance prepare expeditions for observing the phenomena of a total eclipse of the sun), but the inference is subject to verification by actual observation of the phenomena, in which observation the existence of the phenomena and their being perceived go together. Moreover, in arguing about sense-data not now perceived, we are still *thinking* of them. Indeed, even when we suppose the existence of things of which no mind ever has thought or will think, the supposal is still an act of thought concerning these very things. Quite generally, the world with which we deal is the world which, as object of perception, thought, imagination, desire, enters into our experience, in the widest sense of that term. None other can we deal with. If there exists anything which never has, and never will, become an object of human experience, either directly or indirectly, that something is, for us, completely negligible. For, *ex hypothesi,* we have no evidence either of its existence or of its non-existence. Indeed, it is doubtful whether the supposition of such an object has any intelligible meaning at all. In theory and in practice our concern is with the world which reveals itself to our minds. Any other is literally nothing to us. It is only within the experienced world that the terms "existence" and "reality" have any applicability. Carried beyond that world they are empty sound. Thus, each of us makes his contact with the Universe through his acts of perceiving, thinking, etc. His acts of apprehension define "his" world: he cannot even think of anything as not belonging to that world, for, in so thinking of it, he is making it *ipso facto* part of his world.

In short, our position is incurably "egocentric." We cannot eliminate ourselves and then try to think of reality apart from ourselves. We cannot compare an object as it is when perceived with itself as it is when not perceived. We cannot escape from ourselves.

Now, admitting all this as true, does it justify Berkeley's *esse est percipi* principle? Granted that whatever we find to exist is an object which we perceive or think, does it follow that these objects cannot exist except in relation to perceiving or thinking—if not ours, then God's? Or is this impossibility of eliminating ourselves merely a difficulty of method, a predicament? One of Berkeley's most vigorous realist critics, R. B. Perry, maintains that Berkeley's *esse est percipi* principle is simply an illegitimate exploitation of this "egocentric predicament." [1] According to Perry, the predicament is common to all thinkers, and all theories, and should not, therefore, be used in favour of idealism and against realism. We must simply ignore it and seek a decision on other grounds. That we cannot experience reality apart from its relation to ourselves does not prove that reality cannot exist without that relation. Against Perry's view, however, it may be urged that the relation is undeniably a fact, and a fact, moreover, coextensive with experience. Can it really be that such a fact justifies no inference about the nature and existence of the world? That it does justify an inference is the view of all who, accepting the fact, make experience, and the constant connection of mind and object in experience, the basis of their whole philosophy.

Still, though this is a possible choice, it is not a compulsory choice. The egocentric predicament admittedly suggests the *esse est percipi* principle, but it does not conclusively prove that principle.

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[1] See *Present Philosophical Tendencies,* Ch. vi.

6. (ii) PROOFS OF THE *esse est percipi* PRINCIPLE—(b) ARE UNPERCEIVED SENSE-DATA INCONCEIVABLE?

(b) Can we, then, clinch the matter by further argument? Such further argument is offered by the second experiment which Berkeley proposes, viz., can we without contradiction conceive the existence of sense-data unperceived? Now, this raises a fresh point. The question now is not whether we can mean by "to exist" anything but "to be perceived," nor again whether every object we perceive or think stands *ipso facto* in relation to our minds. The question now is whether, from the very nature of the object, it is inconceivable that it should exist except in this relation to a mind. In other words, if we attempt to conceive the object as having, in Berkeley's words, an "absolute existence, without any relation to being perceived," do we find ourselves contradicting the very nature of the object? Can the object be seen to be such that it cannot exist apart from an apprehending mind? If so, the relation of objects to minds is not merely, as the egocentric predicament had shown it to be, universal *in fact* over the whole field of our experience, but it is *necessarily* implied in the very nature of the objects themselves. As we might put it: once an idea, always an idea; once object-for-a-mind, always object-for-a-mind. Here is a characteristic passage illustrating the nature of Berkeley's reasoning. "What are houses, mountains, rivers, and in a word all sensible objects, but the things we perceive by sense? and what do we perceive besides our own ideas or sensations? and is it not plainly repugnant that anyone of these or any combination of them, should exist unperceived?" [1]

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[1] See *Principles of Human Knowledge,* § 4.

Now this latter argument is, certainly, highly questionable. Professor R. B. Perry, with his genius for inventing technical labels, calls it the "fallacy of initial predication."[1] We begin by perceiving, say, a colour and call it an "idea" (*i.e.*, an "object which we perceive"). And then, having so labelled it, we go on to say that it would be a contradiction for an object of perception ever to exist unperceived. But, really, this is arguing from the fact that we have called the colour an object of perception to the conclusion that the colour can never exist unperceived. The illegitimacy of the inference is disguised by Berkeley's introduction of an intermediate step in the term "idea."

The net result would seem to be that Berkeley's *esse est percipi* principle *may* be true, but has *not been proved* to be true. On the other hand, whilst the criticisms of Berkeley show that his arguments do not establish his principle, they do not show that the principle is intrinsically false. Here we must leave the matter so far as Berkeley is concerned, though we shall return to it from quite a different angle in a later chapter.[2]

7. (ii) PROOFS OF THE *esse est percipi* PRINCIPLE—(c) LATER ARGUMENTS

(c) It remains to add only that the issue raised by Berkeley has proved to be a fruitful subject of debate ever since, and that many arguments have been introduced into the debate which lay beyond Berkeley's scope. Of these, we may, in passing, glance at two, because they are of special interest at the present day.

First, then, present-day thinkers have tried to turn the flank of the *esse est percipi* principle by an analysis of the nature of *relations*. The principle asserts that there is a relation between object and perceiving mind, and that the object cannot exist except in that relation. In general, all knowledge is analysed as a specific "cognitive relation" between subject and object. This being granted, the question has been raised whether relations are "external" or "internal." By calling a relation "internal" is meant that the terms which are found standing in that relation cannot exist apart from that relation. By calling a relation "external" is meant that the terms found in that relation can also exist apart from it—they may enter and leave the relation without prejudice to their existence. The *esse est percipi* principle, from this point of view, treats perception, and, in general, knowledge, as an internal relation. Hence, its critics labour to show either that all relations whatever are external, or, at any rate, that the cognitive relation is so. For, if the cognitive relation is external, then objects will be capable of entering that relation, but there will be no necessity for them to do so. They will be able to exist without standing in that relation to any mind whatever.

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[1] See *Present Philosophical Tendencies,* Ch. vi.

[2] See Ch. viii, § 10.

Secondly, the *esse est percipi* principle has been challenged from a wider point of view. The chief motive underlying all forms of present-day "realism" is, in the words of S. Alexander, to assign to minds their proper place and function in the scheme of things. If the *esse est percipi* principle is allowed to stand, the place of mind can only be central. It will be the essential condition of the existence of all objects, if not actually the source which produces or creates them. On the other hand, if it can be shown that objects can exist "independently" of being apprehended by any mind, mind will obviously lose this central and dominating position in the scheme of things. Now, there are many movements in present-day thought which converge upon such a dethronement of mind. Chief among them is the biological theory of evolution, according to which the emergence of minds belongs to the latest stage in the evolution of the world, and presupposes, not only a pre-existing bodily organisation, but the whole physical environment. Clearly, the conditions out of which mind has emerged cannot, on this view, depend for their existence on being objects of mind. The function of mind is to apprehend the environment, and thereby to enable organisms to live more successfully. Mind may even be, as Alexander calls it, a "fresh level of perfection." But, none the less, it is only a special kind of phenomenon among other phenomena in the world. It is not the basis and source of all that exists. Thus, the denial of the *esse est percipi* principle will, if successful, make room for a very different picture of the Universe from that which is presented by Berkeley's spiritual pluralism.

8. (iii) BERKELEY'S SPIRITUAL PLURALISM—(a) WHAT SPIRITS DOES IT INCLUDE?

(iii) We turn, thirdly, to this spiritual pluralism itself—this picture of the world as a society of spirits under the Supreme Spirit, God. Berkeley can hardly be said to have done more than sketch, very roughly, some portions of this picture. Many spaces he has left blank, and some of the lines he has drawn can hardly stand. Perhaps this is just the reason why the concept of a society of spirits has proved so fruitful in philosophical interest, and why a succession of thinkers, basing themselves upon Leibniz even more than upon Berkeley, have devoted their efforts to the attempt to work out this type of world-view more completely.

(a) Berkeley's society of spirits appears to consist only of human spirits and God. He mentions no others, and it is not clear whether he would have admitted others. But, leaving the questions of superhuman spirits and of the disembodied existence of human spirits after death out of account, there is a real problem presented by animals, if not also by plants. The same reasoning which leads us to interpret the body and behaviour of a man as manifesting a human spirit would lead us to recognise spirits in the higher animals too. And if in the higher animals, why not in the lower? And if in the lower animals, why not in plants? For, like animals, plants are organisms of individualised structure, and their reactions to their environment exhibit, like those of animals, the purposive character which we sum up in the term "adaptation." And, lastly, if we thus follow the thread of continuity downwards, can we stop at what we ordinarily call the inorganic and inanimate? May it not be that here, too, the outward and visible form expresses an inward spirit, but a spirit too remote from ours to be still recognised by us as such? If we decide to trust ourselves to these analogies, based on the continuity of Nature, our society of spirits will be vastly transformed. We human spirits will be an aristocracy ranking above serried levels, or strata, of spirits of every degree of development. Our own bodies will be colonies of lower spirits dominated by that one higher spirit which each of us calls his mind or soul. Leibniz's *Monadology* is the classical example of such a thoroughgoing working-out of spiritual pluralism. It yields a picture of the world in which nothing is lifeless or soulless, a world of teeming spiritual life, yet ordered in an ascending hierarchy from the lowest and most rudimentary kind of spirits up to the perfection of spiritual nature in God.

9. (iii) BERKELEY'S SPIRITUAL PLURALISM—(b) CAN TWO SPIRITS PERCEIVE THE SAME IDEA?

(b) Further, to be a spirit is to be constantly active in perceiving and thinking. But perceiving implies "ideas," *i*.e., objects, and each spirit thus has its "world" of objects. This is a very important qualification of the concept of a society of spirits, as we shall see in a moment. But, first, we must raise the question whether two, or more, spirits can perceive the same object? This difficulty does not appear to have occurred to Berkeley at first, but he mentions it later in the *Third Dialogue between Hylas and Philonous*, where he makes Hylas object: "But the *same* idea which is in my mind cannot be in yours, or in any other mind. Doth it not therefore follow, from your principles, that no two can see the same thing?" Berkeley's answer is hardly satisfactory. He is right, indeed, in rejecting "the abstracted idea of identity," *i.e.*, in recognising that when two persons perceive the "same" thing, yet what each perceives is to some extent *different* from what the other perceives. This is easy to verify. Let anyone look at a table from different successive points of view, and he will find that the colour and shape which he perceives from one point of view will differ, in varying degrees, from the colour and shape perceived by him from any other point of view. Thus, even the "same" single observer will perceive the "same" table differently from different points of view. It is easy to see that two, or more, observers looking at the same table from different angles, and each with his own quality of vision, will differ even more in what they perceive. But in order to deal with these facts, it is not enough, as Berkeley does, merely to reject "abstract identity." What is needed is "concrete identity" or *identity in difference.* In other words, we must so conceive "the" table which, as we say, is the "same" for different observers, that all the admitted differences in what different observers perceive are included. Leibniz appreciated the problem and tried to deal with it by his theory of "pre-established harmony" between the object-worlds of different monads (spirits). At the present day, fresh logical methods have been brought to bear on the question both by idealists (*e.g.*, Bradley, Bosanquet) and by realists (*e.g.*, Bertrand Russell). But details of these developments would take us too far. It is enough to become alive to the fact that here is a problem which no spiritual pluralist dare ignore.

10. (iii) BERKELEY'S SPIRITUAL PLURALISM—(c) OUR KNOWLEDGE OF OTHER SPIRITS

(c) Apart from the question of identity, however, objects of sense-perception play a very important part in Berkeley's society of spirits, because all such objects have the function of revealing spirits to each other. There is no sense-datum, or combination of sense-data, which is not the manifestation of spirit. For, human spirits manifest themselves to each other through the collections of sense-data which we call human bodies. And God manifests Himself through the totality of sense-data which we call the physical world or Nature.

This view presupposes that one spirit cannot perceive other spirits directly, but only by inference from the sense-data through which each spirit manifests himself. A spirit knows directly only itself in its activities of perceiving, etc. That there are other spirits in the world like itself is an inference. Applying this doctrine to human spirits, Berkeley writes: "When we see the colour, size, figure, and motions of a man, we perceive only certain sensations or ideas excited in our own minds; and these being exhibited to our view in sundry distinct collections, serve to mark out unto us the existence of finite and created spirits like ourselves. Hence it is plain we do not see a man, if by *man* is meant, that which lives, moves, perceives, and thinks as we do: but only such a certain collection of ideas, as directs us to think there is a distinct principle of thought and motion, like to ourselves, accompanying and represented by it. And after the same manner we see God. . . ."[1] Here, again, Berkeley has opened up a problem bigger than he realised. True, many thinkers have followed him in his solution, which even at the present day is still the most fashionable. Nonetheless, there are many difficulties in the way of accepting as adequate the theory that we know other minds by inference from the resemblance between their bodies and behaviour and ours. For one thing, we do not see ourselves as others see us, *i.e.*, we never have of our own bodies, movements, gestures, facial expressions that extensive spectator's knowledge which we have of the bodies, etc., of others. Again, the argument seems to presuppose a degree of knowledge of our own minds which, in fact, we do not acquire until long after we have learnt to recognise other minds. Indeed, self-knowledge comes very largely as the result of social intercourse. Through being treated as minds by others we learn to recognise ourselves as minds.

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[1] *Principles of Human Knowledge,* § 145; *cf.,* also, §§ 147-48.

At the present day, this problem of our knowledge of other minds, so far from being settled, is one of the most keenly discussed, and our ampler knowledge both of individual and social psychology has shown us that it is far from being the simple problem which it is on Berkeley's view. But, undeniably, it is a crucial problem for spiritual pluralism.

11. (iii) BERKELEY'S SPIRITUAL PLURALISM—(d) THE RELATION OF GOD TO MAN

(d) Further difficulties arise when God is brought into the argument. These difficulties are of two kinds. One concerns our knowledge of God. The other concerns the part played by God in the commerce of sense-data through which men learn to know one another as spirits.

Our knowledge of God, according to Berkeley, is "after the same manner" as our knowledge of human spirits other than our own. This must mean (*a*) that we cannot know God directly, but only by inference—a doctrine which would be challenged by all mystics; and (*b*) that we can infer God from that inclusive collection of sense-data which we call Nature—which inference, though it yields a creator of Nature, yet gives us something much less than the God of religion. Berkeley does, indeed, assert that "the existence of God is far more evidently perceived than the existence of man, because the effects of Nature are infinitely more numerous and considerable than those ascribed to human agents." And he declares, further, that God is "intimately present to our minds," because all our "ideas and sensations," *i.e.*, all the objects we perceive, are the effects He produces in our minds, they are the "visible language" through which God speaks to us. In passages such as these we may well see Berkeley's attempts to correct the tendency of his theory to make God appear remote and His existence speculative and precarious. But not thus can the weakness of this inference be overcome. After all, what is the likeness between the compact collection of sense-data which is a human body and that vast, miscellaneous mass of sense-data which is Nature? The characters of the human body and of human behaviour from which, according to Berkeley, we infer a human spirit, have little resemblance to the characters of Nature from which he would have us infer God. Berkeley, in fact, infers God from Nature partly because his theory requires a creator for all "ideas" which are not of human producing; and partly because, in the beauty and order of Nature, and in the fixity of Natural Law, he sees evidences of God's wisdom, benevolence, and power. But to neither kind of evidence for God is there a fair parallel in the evidence for human spirits. Thus, it is far from clear how we know God "after the same manner" as man. Once more the problem which Berkeley bequeathed to his successors is deeper than he saw.

And now for the second difficulty, which is as formidable as it has been commonly overlooked. All Nature, says Berkeley, is a "sign," because an "effect," of God. But Nature—"everything we see, hear, feel, or anywise perceive by the senses"—must include, along with all other human bodies and their behaviour, our own bodies and behaviour. What follows? I lift, say, my arm and strike a blow; I move my speech-organs and articulate sounds. In both cases, I produce collections of sense-data.[1] Yet these same sense-data, being undeniably parts of Nature, are also produced by God. The collections of sense-data, then, which we call movements of human bodies, are caused at once by two agents, viz., by human spirits and by God. How can this be? And what sort of relation of human spirits to the Divine Spirit is thereby implied? To these questions Berkeley supplies no answer because, so it would seem, he wholly overlooked the problem. He does, indeed, say that God "maintains that intercourse between spirits whereby they are able to perceive the existence of each other."[1] But this merely means that it is by God's will that men perceive the sense-data which are their own and other men's bodily movements. It does not explain how we can conceive these movements to be produced at once by human spirits and by God.

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[1] Incidentally, is the existence of these sense-data one with being *perceived* by me, or is it one with being *produced* by me?

Clearly, the theory that the Universe is a society of spirits, centering in God as the Author of Nature, and that Nature is an assemblage of sense-data, bristles with difficulties. But, then, it is just the difficulties which make a philosophical theory fascinating and supply a fertile stimulus to further efforts. Berkeley's version of spiritual pluralism has the great merit of showing clearly, if unintentionally, just where the most formidable problems lie.

12. (iv) GOD IN BERKELEY'S IDEALISM

(iv) We have already anticipated much of what has to be said concerning God, as the fourth "idealistic" factor in

Berkeley's *esse est percipi* principle seems to have been originally framed without reference to this problem of one's own body and its voluntary movements. Berkeley, in fact, was thinking, to begin with, of man only as an *observer* of Nature, not as an *agent* who is himself, through his body, part of Nature.

[1] *Op. cit.,* § 147.

Berkeley's philosophy. But something more remains to be said here, for, so far, we have considered God rather as a *spirit*, than specifically as *God*. In other words, so far the part assigned to God in the Universe has been determined by purely speculative, rather than by strictly religious, motives. We have been asked to think of God as the eternal, omnipresent mind for whose perception all Nature exists, and who creates all Nature according to His own fixed laws. But in religion, though we may mean all this by "God," we certainly mean much else besides. For in religion we love and fear and worship God. Yet what is there to love, fear, worship in this metaphysical God of Berkeley's? Supposing Berkeley's arguments convinced us of the existence of such a Being, still it would not follow that our hearts were stirred or our pulses quickened by religious emotion. For Berkeley himself the term "God" was, undoubtedly, charged with religious associations. But this is because Berkeley was a sincerely religious man, not because religion, as such, contributes anything directly to his philosophical theory. It may be said that this is as it should be; that to prove the existence of God on purely speculative grounds, apart from any appeal to the evidence of religious experience itself, is to render a greater service to religion than if the proof had been based on the testimony of the "religious consciousness." But the answer is that whatever Being may thus be proved to exist does not evoke the response of religious sentiment. The "God" of a metaphysical theory which does not include religion among its premises is not the God of religion. This consideration opens up new vistas. We must expect, and we shall find, other types of idealism which try to approach the problem of

God, not apart from, but through, a philosophical appreciation of religion.[1]

And there is a last point. Nature, on Berkeley's theory, implies not only an all-witnessing mind, nor only a creator, but a creator who is all-wise and all-good. In other words, Nature, just because it is nothing but the "signs and effects" of God, must be perfect, or, at least, the best possible. But what then of the evidences of *evil* which confront us on all sides—"monsters, untimely births, fruits blasted in the blossom, rains falling in desert places, miseries incident to human life," as Berkeley himself puts it? [2] The problem is doubly pressing if Nature is but the sensuous medium through which spirits communicate with each other. The evil must, then, have a value for the moral making and moulding of spirits. In general, the argument from design, inferring, as it does, the infinite wisdom and goodness of the creator, in spite of the evil in the world, raises in a fundamental form what is nowadays called "the problem of value." Berkeley's brief discussion of evil runs wholly on the lines on which conventional theology justifies the ways of God (where God inflicts evil) to man. He does not ask the deeper question whether religion, at its best, does not take us "beyond good and evil" altogether.

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[1] See Chs. viii and ix, *passim*.

[2] *Op. cit.*, § 151.

Chapter V

JAMES WARD'S "PLURALISM AND THEISM"

1. HOW FAR IS JAMES WARD A SPIRITUAL PLURALIST?

In the previous chapters, Ward's idealism has frequently been classed as an example of the type called "Spiritual Pluralism." It is high time that we made the *amende honorable* to the shade of Ward by stating, straightway and most explicitly, that he is far from being an out-and-out Pluralist. On the contrary, he, recognises that Spiritual Pluralism has limitations; that it raises questions which it cannot solve; and that we must go beyond it if we would frame, however tentatively, an answer to these questions. In other words, it is an essential part of Ward's idealism to acknowledge that Spiritual Pluralism, thought out to the end, is unsatisfactory, and requires to be supplemented by "Theism", *i.e.*, by a philosophical theory of God which transcends the framework within which Spiritual Pluralism moves.

At the same time, there are good reasons for using Ward's idealism as a modern illustration of the type of Spiritual Pluralism. For, first, he not only starts his philosophising from the pluralistic standpoint, but he stands out among the thinkers of the recent past for using all the resources of his wide knowledge in philosophy, psychology, and the natural sciences, in order to develop Spiritual Pluralism as far as it can possibly be made to go. Secondly, he differs from many of the critics of Spiritual Pluralism in holding that this type of theory, however unsatisfactory it may turn out to be in the end, cannot from the very start be condemned as self-contradictory. And, thirdly, his pluralistic approach to all philosophical problems colours in the end even his theory of God. Ward's God, as we shall see, is conceived as only a Pluralist would be moved to conceive Him. It is a God so conceived as to leave room for a Pluralistic Universe. Ward, one feels, would like to be an out-and-out Pluralist, if that were possible. Hence, the value of his theory lies just in this, that it makes at once the strongest possible case for Spiritual Pluralism and acknowledges also its inherent limitations. Ward presents the strong and the weak points of Spiritual Pluralism better than any other thinker. He deals with problems which neither Berkeley nor Leibniz seem ever to have noticed, though it is only fair to remind oneself that Ward has the advantage over Berkeley and Leibniz of two centuries of philosophical discussion and scientific advance. Above all, he has, like every philosopher since 1800, had the advantage of having studied Kant.

2. THE FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS OF SPIRITUAL PLURALISM—(a) MIND

The programme of Ward's philosophy is "to ascertain what we can know, or reasonably believe, concerning the constitution of the world, *interpreted throughout and strictly in terms of Mind.*"[1] To interpret the world in terms of Mind means for Ward that whatever is real must be, in its own inner character, of the nature of mind, soul, spirit.[1] If the Universe consists—as, on the face of it, it appears to do—of a multiplicity of real things, then each of these "things" must be a mind in its own right, so that the Universe is a vast assemblage or society of minds. In such a universe everything is animated; there is nothing that is lifeless or mindless. Above all, there is no room for "matter", if matter is conceived as the very antithesis of mind. For, that would leave us with what is technically called a "dualism"—a theory of two kinds of things in the world, viz. material things or "bodies" and spiritual things or "minds", which are irreducible to each other and the co-existence and interaction of which is a standing miracle. For Ward, whatever exists can be of one sort only, viz. mind. What we call "matter" or "material things," including our own bodies, are but minds of a lower order. That this sounds paradoxical from the ordinary common-sense point of view, Ward frankly admits, but he claims that it yields the most intelligible view in the end, and, above all, that it furnishes the only rational basis for a belief in God.

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[1] *The Realm of Ends or Pluralism and Theism, Preface,* p. v., Ward's italics.

What, then, is a mind? It is an "experient," a "subject", perceiving, thinking, feeling, willing. But, in every one of these modes of experience, the subject is confronted by "objects" which, on their side, are themselves experients or subjects, each aware of objects in its turn. Thus, all experience of objects is really, in the last analysis, a *social* phenomenon, an "intersubjective intercourse." For, there are, on this view, no mere objects, no inanimate things. Every "thing" is a mind, a subject experiencing objects, a "person."

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[1] These three terms are always used as *synonyms* in philosophical discussion.

3. THE FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS OF SPIRITUAL PLURALISM—(b) BEHAVIOUR

Further, each mind, whether knowing or willing, is always active, always "behaving." In behaviour we can distinguish two factors. There is (i) the occasion or external situation, and there is (ii) the subject's response, which is characterised by spontaneity and initiative. Thus, behaviour is never wholly determined "from without," by the occasion. It is always determined also "from within"; it is an expression of the agent's own nature. It may be the result of his choice among the possibilities inherent in the occasion.

Now, behaviour always has direction or aim. Consciously or unconsciously, it pursues a goal—the good. According to the occasion and to the agent's resources, the good sought may be merely self-conservation, or, again, it may be self-improvement, guided, perhaps by a definite ideal. Between these two poles of self-maintenance and self-perfection all behaviour moves—aiming always to realise the maximum good open to the agent in the given situation.

But, pursuit of the good does not guarantee attainment of the good. The advance is by trial and error. The path of progress is strewn with false starts and failures. We become "expert only by experiment." The more we experiment, the more we learn; and the more we learn, the more forward-looking, well-adapted, efficient does behaviour become; the more it gains in conscious guidance and control. If it begins as blind striving and settles in stable environments into the grooves of automatisms and habits, it may also progress towards striving which is enlightened by knowledge and ventures on new ways of dealing even with familiar situations.

Fundamentally, therefore, the spontaneity and initiative of the subject imply a willingness to adventure and to take risks. We trust and try before we know, before we are sure of success. Whether we call this the blind urge of life or primitive credulity does not matter. We are so built that to objective stimuli we respond, and respond experimentally, varying our response according to the satisfactoriness or unsatisfactoriness of the result achieved.

In short, we live by faith before we live by knowledge. This is a very important point in Ward's theory, for, as we shall see below,[1] Ward holds it to be reasonable for us to let faith carry us on in philosophising where knowledge has reached its limits.

It is faith, too, conceived as one in its root with the venturesome and experimental character of behaviour which, according to Ward, accounts for evolution. "Almost every forward step in the progress of life could be formulated as an act of faith—an act not warranted by knowledge—on the part of the pioneer who first made it." Applying this principle to the biological theory according to which the first reptiles evolved out of fishes taking to the dry land, and the first birds from a sort of lizard, he writes, "there was little, for example, in all that the wisest fish could know, to justify the belief that there was more scope for existence on the earth than in the water, or to show that persistent endeavours to live on land would issue in the transformation of his swim-bladder into lungs. And before a bird had cleaved the air there was surely little, in all that the most daring of saurian speculators could see or surmise concerning that untrodden element, to warrant him in risking his neck in order to satisfy his longing to soar; although, when he did try, his forelimbs were transformed to wings at length, and his dim prevision of a bird became incarnate in himself."[1] Such an argument, no doubt, sounds fantastic to most people, and no sober scientist will use such language, if he values his scientific reputation. But, then, it is part of scientific training to think as little as possible in terms of mind, and to be content with *describing* the successive steps in the order of evolution, without attempting any speculative *interpretation* thereof.[2] Meanwhile, Ward's daring argument has, at least, the merit of illustrating with startling clearness just what he conceives behaviour to be.

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[1] See § 7, below.

4. THE FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS OF PLURALISM—(c) SOCIAL INTERACTION

So far we have followed Ward's account of what an individual mind is and of how it behaves. But, we know that these minds live in presence of one another, as fellow-members of the universe, and, hence, our next problem is to consider how they interact or communicate with each other, and what sort of unity is implied in their intercourse.

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[1] *The Realm of Ends,* p. 415.

[2] As I write this chapter, I notice in the papers that at the recent meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, held at Philadelphia (Dec., 1926), Dr. D. T. MacDougal, of the Carnegie Institute, Washington, D. C., characterised as "infantile fancies" the famous Indian botanist, Sir J. C. Bose's, interpretation of his experiments as meaning that plants have a soul and a nervous system akin to those of animals. This illustrates the horror felt by some scientists at the admission of minds or souls anywhere in Nature. It is an advantage, we may suggest, that experiments in speculation which are regarded as not permissible in Science, are permissible in Philosophy. It has happened that Science has thereby gained in the end.

In other words, Spiritual Pluralism regards the Universe as a society of minds, and our problem, therefore, is to draw from human society with which we are familiar, analogies for the interpretation of the cosmic society.

The two key-concepts here are (i) *creative synthesis* and (ii) *sympathetic rapport.* Let us see what they mean, and how they apply.

(i) The principle of creative synthesis is: *"not new entities, but new values."* In other words, for Spiritual Pluralism the ultimate entities which compose the Universe are individual minds. No doubt, these minds are of all kinds and degrees, human, infra-human, supra-human. But, there is no suggestion that, when such minds form a group or join in an organisation, a new entity—a group-mind or social mind—is thereby created which should be added to the N individuals composing the group as the $N + 1^{th}$. One of the constituent minds may become the dominant or controlling mind in the group, but no new mind is added to the pre-existing minds as a result of their association in a group. But, on the other hand, there is an inward transformation of each constituent mind. Each of them enjoys new experiences and is stimulated into new behaviour by its place and function in the group. It becomes a different, and, perhaps, a better, mind than it was before. "Not new entities, but new values."

Biological theory recognises that the association of living cells in an organism leads to differentiation and specialisation. The cells undertake different functions within the economy of the whole. One cell, or group of cells, does one kind of work, another does another kind. There is "division of labour," regulated by the needs of the whole organism, and each of the labourers depends on the others doing their work, and *vice versa.* Such differentiation of function and mutual coöperation is the result of what Ward calls "creative synthesis." If we want a working model of it even more familiar to us than this biological one, we must reflect on the way in which human intercourse in society transforms the ways of thinking and acting of each member of the society. Our private and personal perceptions, judgments, beliefs are moulded and made over according to social patterns which are themselves the products of creative synthesis springing from the interaction of individual thinkers. Thus, *e.g.*, our scientific world-view is not the achievement of any single mind, but of countless minds coöperating for generations. It is transmitted to each new generation by the process of "education," and it is only when a mind has been trained and habituated to think in just this way about the facts of its experience (to judge them in accordance with just this social pattern), that it is in a position to "add to scientific knowledge," *i.e.*, to develop or correct the traditional pattern. So, again, in matters of moral conduct, the individual has his raw impulses and instincts with which he is born into the world. Moral education moulds them and makes them over in accordance with social standards and conventions. That is to say, it teaches and compels the individual to seek the satisfaction of his needs through behaviour which makes his satisfaction compatible with, and contributory to, the satisfaction of the needs of others. More than this: it not merely curbs egotism by regard for others, but it awakens interest in, and devotion to, a common good. Now, social standards, up to an organised scheme of life embodying some ideal of common good, began as social experiments and inventions: they are forms of behaviour resulting from the creative synthesis of minds seeking, by trial and error, the best way of living together. The imperfections of all present societies show that there is still need for further social invention and experiment, if there is ever to be realised the "perfect commonwealth" in which all minds in the Universe will be adjusted to each other in harmonious coöperation. *This* is the goal to which Spiritual Pluralism points.

(ii) So far, we have taken interaction between minds for granted, without asking *how* it takes place. The concept of *sympathetic rapport* is Ward's answer. Here is his general description:—Sympathetic rapport "entirely consists, in the first place, of the apprehension or the knowledge on the part of one person of the 'attitude,' the feelings and intentions displayed or announced by other persons; secondly, in their coöperation or opposition, actual or prospective; and, finally, following on this, in the new feelings and intentions of the person interested, to which this knowledge leads."[1] Such *rapport* obtains, not only between one man and another or others, but also between men and animals, *e.g.*, between a man and his dog, or a hunter and his prey. Moreover, such *rapport* between minds may be *mediated* by other minds fulfilling a purely instrumental function. Such, according to Ward, is the situation when, *e.g.*, a private citizen avails himself of the services of a public official, say in a post-office or bank. Here the interest of one mind is not in the other mind as such, but merely in the other mind performing its function so as to further the first mind's purposes. On the same principle, Ward proposes to deal with the problem of the interaction of body and soul. It is obvious, of course, that on the principles of Spiritual Pluralism, a man's body is not simply a material machine, distinct from his mind or soul, but that the whole psycho-physical organism is a compact social organisation in which a great many lesser minds of different sorts function together, partly according to laws of their own, partly under the control of a dominant mind.[1] Ward claims that, on this view, the traditional difficulty of explaining the interaction of body and soul simply disappears. For, instead of the unintelligible interaction of two heterogeneous substances, we have the coöperation by sympathetic rapport of minds in an organised system. It is not necessary for this purpose that the dominant mind should know how the lesser minds are organised and do their work: we think and act without being aware of our brains and nerves. It is enough that brains and nerves (which are really minds of a lower order) should be attuned by sympathetic rapport to the thoughts and purposes of the dominant mind, and that the latter should have learnt what it can call upon the body to do. The principle, according to Ward, is clear, even if the details are unavoidably obscure.[2]

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[1] See ***Realm of Ends***, p. 218.

5. SPIRITUAL PLURALISM AND THE MATERIAL WORLD

Obviously, the greatest obstacle to the acceptance of Spiritual Pluralism is what we ordinarily think of as Inanimate Nature or the Material World. For, if Spiritual Pluralism is right, we must revolutionise our habits of thinking, discard the concept of "dead matter" altogether, and extend the concept of life, nay, more, of *mental* life, to everything in Nature. By what arguments can this revolution in thought be made plausible?

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[1] This dominant mind is, of course, the "mind" or "soul" which we usually contrast with the "body."

[2] See *Realm of Ends,* 2nd edit., *Supplementary Note iii,* pp. 463 ff.

Ward relies for this purpose on three lines of thought.

(i) The first, and most plausible, is the general principle of *continuity*. Arguing from man downwards through the animal kingdom to plants and, ultimately, to the physical objects usually called "inanimate"—is there anywhere a point at which we can confidently draw the line and say, "Here is where mind ends; below this there is only mindless matter"? Of course, in practice we draw such a line habitually, but practice is guided by other interests than that of ultimate truth, and is, therefore, not entitled to dictate to philosophy in this matter. This leaves open the *possibility*, at any rate, that at the point where in practice we stop we merely fail to recognise mind. Moreover, this possibility may be, if not converted into a certainty, at least greatly strengthened by further general considerations, such as the advantage of getting rid of the dualism of matter and spirit; of having a homogeneous universe consisting of nothing but minds, and intelligible on the analogy of the intercourse of human minds in human society.

(ii) Secondly, there are detailed empirical arguments, such as those of Sir J. C. Bose, which tend to close up the gap between plants and animals; or those analogies between the organic and the inorganic which come into view when, *e.g.*, chemists begin to talk of the "evolution" of the chemical elements. Of course, no single argument of this sort is conclusive; but their cumulative effect may, nevertheless, be considerable as keeping our minds open to the possibility of having to revolutionise our usual conception of the world.

(iii) But, there is still the obstacle that the material world, especially as revealed by Physics and Chemistry, is a world of constants and uniformities; a world where law and order reign; where the individual units (molecules, atoms, electrons) are conceived to be each exactly like every other, so that none has any distinctive individuality; where there is no spontaneity, the behaviour of every unit being strictly determined. Ward is profoundly impressed by the contrast between "Nature," so viewed, and what he calls "History"—the concrete world of individual minds, each distinct from every other, each a centre of experiences and a source of spontaneous activity; a world of variable behaviour and new developments and creative synthesis. Is it possible to extend the historical point of view to the physicist's Nature? Is it possible to interpret the latter as, so to speak, a lower stage of History, fundamentally akin to, and homogeneous with, historical processes?

Yes, it is possible, according to Ward. For, first, the uniformities of so-called "inanimate" Nature may be only statistical mass-effects, *i.e.*, they may merely sum up, in general formulæ which smooth out all individual differences, the behaviour of large numbers of units each of which behaves differently from every other. Suppose the physicist's uniformities are only averages of a large number of cases:—we all know how widely the individual cases may differ that are summed up in an average. Moreover, secondly, on this interpretation, the scientific view of Nature will be only an abstract scheme symbolising certain aspects of the concrete world. And, lastly, so far as the uniformities and regularities of Nature are really such, and not merely statistical mass-effects, should they not be explained like habits as due to behaviour originally varied and flexible having become stereotyped and fixed? For, we have empirical evidence of spontaneous and plastic behaviour settling, by repetition, into the groove of habit; but we have no evidence of things capable only of mechanical regularity of behaviour acquiring flexibility and freedom.

So, once more, the possibility that "inanimate" Nature is really "animate" is kept open, as, on balance, the more reasonable view.

6. THE LIMITS OF SPIRITUAL PLURALISM

The principle of continuity, of course, permits not only an application downwards to infra-human forms of mind, but also an application upwards to supra-human forms of mind. Is there any empirical evidence for such an upward extension? The only evidence to which Ward is able to point is that there is, in the nature of things, no justification for our restricting our philosophical speculations to this planet and the life upon it. There may be life, there may be mind, on other stars; but, if there is, such minds are completely isolated from us, and we from them, unless we care to postulate supra-human minds through whom the minds in these (otherwise isolated) worlds are related in a higher unity. A strange speculation this, inspired, perhaps, by some reminiscence of the function assigned to angels in religious mythology. Philosophically, the only point of interest is to find direct evidence in support of an extension of the principle of continuity upwards. Such extension would be justified, if it were needed to unify a Universe in which there are, so to speak, scattered and disconnected colonies of minds. The unity required could be conceived only on the hypothesis of the existence of supra-human minds who are related to us as we are related to infra-human minds on this earth, and who control us as we control the minds below us.

It hardly repays us to explore these remote speculative possibilities. Only one point must be noticed. Suppose we let the principle of continuity carry us to a single Supreme Mind at the top of the cosmic scale, will that Mind be God? If so, then God, in this pluralistic scheme, will be only *primus inter pares*—one mind among others: superior, no doubt, and controlling, but not the God that answers to the demand of religion.

This consideration brings Ward up somewhat sharply against the limits of Spiritual Pluralism. There is, for him, both a lower limit and an upper limit. Our philosophising starts in the middle, as it were—with the "Many," *i.e.*, with the multiplicity of distinct minds which we find in the world. But the principle of continuity, taken together with the principle of evolution, leads us in the downward direction to the problem of the first beginning of the Many, and in the upward direction to the problem of the ultimate goal of evolution in a transcendent unity. Now, neither of these problems is soluble in terms of Spiritual Pluralism. At the lower limit, we may speculate concerning a "Prime Mover" who creates individual minds and sets the whole process of evolution going. At the upper limit, we may speculate about God as the Supreme Reality in which the whole evolutionary process will find its fulfilment. And, lastly, we may even speculate on the identity of this starting-point and this goal. Perhaps, the Prime Mover and God are one and the same, and the world-process with its many spiritual agents is the manifestation of God, who is, in the language of religion, at once immanent and transcendent.

7. KNOWLEDGE AND FAITH

At the points where these speculations begin, knowledge fails us; proof is no longer possible; even empirical probability leaves us in the lurch. If we are to transcend the limits of knowledge, we must soar on the wings of faith.

But faith, as we already know,[1] is for Ward more fundamental than knowledge. It is one with the inherently experimental and venturesome character of all mental life. We come to know by learning; we learn by doing; in doing we venture and trust where we cannot be sure. We seek the good, implicitly believing that it can be attained, though it is only by painful trial and error that we come to distinguish the roads along which it is profitable to seek further from those which are blind-alleys.

Thus faith is fundamental, being rooted in all the instinctive urges of life for self-maintenance, self-increase, self-perfection—or, more simply, for life, more abundant life, perfect life. Living is prior to knowing, and it is always more than knowing. Its momentum carries it on, flooding over the barriers of knowledge. But, one gain of knowledge is that, by reflection, life becomes conscious of itself, of its direction and aim. It becomes possible to ask, "Is faith rational?"

What, then, is it that this faith, which is one with our existence as living minds, bids us believe, when we reflect upon and express its meaning. Its fundamental article is that the good, the perfection which we seek and which in all our ideals we try to define for our guidance, is realisable in the universe. We may misconceive the good in detail and have still much to learn about the real nature of our ideals, but, at any rate, we pursue the good in the faith that the Universe is not such as to make the good in principle unrealisable, not such as to turn our ideals in principle into vain delusions. Such a Universe would be an irrational Universe, and it cannot be rational to believe in an irrational Universe. Hence, if the Universe as we "know" it, or as empirical evidence shows it to be, is not rational in the sense required by our faith, then, recognising the limitations of knowledge, faith has a right to postulate in the Universe the required harmony with our ideals. This harmony with the inherent demand of life for perfection, this guarantee that the good is rooted in the very nature of the Universe, is what is meant by the existence of God. Hence, faith in God and in a God-created universe is a rational faith.[1]

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[1] See § 3, above.

8. SPIRITUAL PLURALISM AND GOD

But, having reached this position by a sort of leap of faith, which, if Ward is right, springs from our inmost being, we are bound to look back and consider the relation of God to the Pluralistic Universe—the society of minds—from which we started.

There are problems here which even faith-inspired thinking cannot solve. And, after all, being but human, we have no right to expect that it is within the power of our thinking to unravel the riddle of the Universe completely. Still, there are two problems on which Ward attempts to throw some light.

They are (i) the problem of the independence and freedom of finite minds over against God; and (ii) the problem of evil.

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[1] For a more detailed statement of this argument, see *Realm of Ends,* Ch. xix., and for the logic of it, Ch. xi., pp. 245-6.

(i) Believing in God as at once the transcendent ground and the transcendent goal of the world-process, Ward is not, and cannot be, an out-and-out Pluralist.[1] The Universe through God is *One* in a sense which goes deeper than all empirical plurality. At the same time, Ward is also determined to preserve to each individual mind its spontaneity and initiative, lest it have to be conceived as a mere puppet of which God pulls the strings, or, in more philosophical language, lest it be a mere mode of the Divine substance. Thus, at this point, Ward is out to save Pluralism, if he can. The problem, then, is how to conceive finite minds at once as created by God and thus dependent on God, and as free agents and thus independent of God. His solution is that "God creates creators," and that he does so by a voluntary "self-limitation" of his own being. In other words, each finite mind is endowed by God with something of His own creative power, and left free to exercise that power in interaction with other minds, striving by trial and error to realise that perfection which, in virtue of its origin from God, is its heritage.

Such a solution, obviously, raises many problems of philosophical theology. What, for example, becomes of God's omniscience and omnipotence? The latter, perhaps, is not seriously endangered by an act of voluntary self-limitation. At least, it is not implausible to argue, as Ward does, that "surely the greater the world—the greater the freedom and capacity of his creatures—the greater still is he who created and sustains and somehow surely over-rules it all." [1] But the saving of omniscience is more difficult. In fact, Ward can save it only at the price of a reinterpretation which amounts in fact to a limitation. He quotes with approval Dr. Martineau's sayings that "foreknowledge of the contingent is not a perfection," [2] and, again, that God, "lending us a portion of his causation, refrains from covering all with his omniscience." [3] In Ward's own words, God knows all the possibilities in the Universe, but not which of these possibilities finite minds will freely choose to realise. God has fixed the goal, but leaves us to find our own way, among many possible ways, towards it. After all, on any view of creation, finite minds must have in them something of the nature of God, and their search for the perfection of their own nature must orient them, through all trial and error, towards God.

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[1] See § 1, above.

(ii) In this context, too, the problem of evil—and especially of moral evil—finds, according to Ward, an intelligible solution. Evil cannot be absolute; it cannot be eternally rooted in the nature of things. Such a supposition would contradict the nature of God. "If Theism be true, then evil can only be relative and must gradually disappear." [4] In short we must believe it to be incidental to the process of evolution by which we are destined to achieve the good. "Only after proving all things can we hold fast to that which is good." [5] But to believe that perfection will be the outcome of the process, and that the price of the struggle towards it is worth paying, that, once more, requires a venture of faith, transcending knowledge.

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[1] *Realm of Ends*, p. 443. [2] *Op. cit.*, p. 492 (third edition).

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 316; see the other passages quoted there from other thinkers. [4] *Op. cit.*, p. 439.

[5] *Op. cit.*, p. 446.

9. WARD AND BERKELEY

We shall reserve criticism of Ward's exposition of Spiritual Pluralism in a Theistic setting, until we have studied its chief rival, Absolute Idealism, and can compare the one with the other.[1] But, here, it is worth while to compare, briefly, the Spiritual Pluralism of Berkeley with that of Ward, and to note the likenesses and the differences, and the advances made.

(a) In both systems, we have a society of spirits or minds, reposing on and culminating in God. But, whereas Berkeley's society, apparently, consists only of human spirits and God, Ward uses the principle of continuity to enlarge his society to cosmic proportions, including ordered levels of infra-human and supra-human spirits. For neither thinker is there any "matter," *i.e.*, anything which is real and yet not a mind or spirit.

(b) This difference in the range and kind of spirits recognised by each thinker is closely bound up with another difference which is as curious as it is important. For Berkeley, a human body is a "collection of sense-data"; [2] for Ward, it is an organisation of subordinate minds. For Berkeley, every so-called "material" thing is a collection of sense-data which exist, by the *esse est percipi* principle, only when perceived by a mind. For Ward, every material thing is a society of minds, each of which exists in its own right. For Berkeley, Nature, *i.e.*, the whole assemblage of objects of perception, is the "visual language" of God. For Ward, it is the society of spirits striving towards their perfection in God. In fact, there is nothing in Ward which corresponds to Berkeley's *esse est percipi* principle, or to Berkeley's preoccupation with the status of sense-data in the Universe. This seems a real lacuna in Ward's theory. He makes no attempt to find a place for sense-data in his society of minds, or to explain why a world consisting in last analysis solely of minds should be so constructed that each mind appears to every other in the guise of a variegated pattern of coloured shapes, sounds, smells, tastes, and other sense-data.[1]

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[1] See *Epilogue,* Ch. xi., below.

[2] *Cf.* Ch. iii, § 5 and Ch. iv., § 10.

(c) On the other hand, Ward deals far more fully with many problems which Berkeley simply ignores. His concept of mind is much fuller and more adequate than Berkeley's; and his theories of "creative synthesis" and "sympathetic rapport" are valuable additions to the framework of a Spiritual Pluralism which tries to keep in touch, on the one side, with the scientific theory of evolution, and, on the other, with the modern interest in sociology and social psychology. And, certainly, Ward shows himself far more keenly alive to the problems involved in the relation of God to man, and to other finite spirits. His distinction, too, between knowledge and faith, of which we shall hear more when we come to Kant's Idealism,[2] by which it was suggested to Ward, shows that the belief in the existence of God is not so easy to justify as Berkeley had thought. On the other hand, Ward's justification of belief in the existence of God suffers, like Berkeley's attempted "proofs," from the defect that it tries to reach its goal without appeal to the religious experience. This is the more curious in that Ward admits that religious experience "implies a consciousness of the presence of a higher spiritual being—a consciousness which is wholly distinct from the belief in other selves" which we reach by interpretation of bodily behaviour. More strangely still, he excuses himself from using religious experience as evidence on the ground that it is faith, not knowledge; that it "cannot compel assent on purely scientific or merely speculative grounds."[1] Yet, Ward himself, as we have seen, has in the end to fall back on faith. Nor is it obvious that the speculations which he regards as rational ventures of faith are any more powerful to compel assent than the immediate response to God in religion. But the fundamental objection to Ward's God is the same as to Berkeley's: "The 'God' of a metaphysical theory which does not include religion among its premises is not the God of religion."[2]

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[1] *Op. cit.,* Ch. xi, on "The Cosmology of Theism" skirts this problem, but does not really deal with it.

[2] See, below, Part iii., Ch. vii., § 7.

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[1] See for this whole argument, *The Realm of Ends,* p. 186, *note.*

[2] See Ch. iv., § 12.

PART II

SPIRITUAL MONISM

Chapter VI

SCHOPENHAUER AND BERGSON

1. MONISM V. PLURALISM—EMPIRICAL ARGUMENTS

One or Many?—a problem as old as philosophy itself. Is Reality One—a unity, a single substance, a single force, a single principle? Or is Reality Many—a multiplicity of substances, forces, principles? This is the issue between Monists and Pluralists.

The ancient Greek scientist-philosophers of Ionia, Thales, Anaximander, Heraclitus, and others, with whose speculations the history of philosophy is reckoned as beginning, were Monists. They tried to discover the single stuff, so to speak, of which all things are made, and identified this single stuff variously with water, air, fire. The Pluralist movement enters upon the scene a little later with Empedocles' theory of four elements, to culminate presently in Democritus' Atomism. By this time the essential factors in the problem had been brought to light and defined. Men had learned to see that there is an empirical side to the problem, and a logical one. Our theory, be it monistic or pluralistic, must fit the facts, but it must also conform to logical standards of consistency and conceivability.

Empirically, as James Ward never tired of insisting, the Universe is constructed on a pluralistic pattern. Most obviously, as the child's song has it, it is "full of all manner of things." The night-sky on a clear evening sparkles with countless stars, each distinct from all others. Here on earth there are not only endlessly different *kinds* of things, but the individual *specimens* of each kind are, each of them, just itself and no other. However alike, proverbially, two peas may be, yet this is this, and that is that, and two they are, not one, as long as they are at all. More obviously still is each human individual, each mind or soul, unique, and even if two individuals were as exactly similar as two newly-minted coins of the same value, they would still be distinct; they would still be two. Multiplicity, then, is obviously an undeniable empirical fact.

But, of course, such considerations as these do not solve the problem: they rather open it up. For, since the days of Parmenides at any rate, no Monist has attempted to hold that there is no such thing as multiplicity at all, or that multiplicity is a mere illusion, hiding from our sight the single, undifferentiated One, which alone is real. For Monists, the Many are an "appearance", but not an illusion. For them, the One gives rise to, or differentiates itself into, the Many, and the Many depend upon and have their being in the One.

Moreover, is unity less an empirical fact than multiplicity? In one sense, yes—for the Universe (or Reality), as a whole, even if it be a unity, is not perceived as a whole at any one moment by any human mind. What we perceive is only a fragment, a selection, of the whole. On the other hand, however many be the objects of any moment's perception, they are, after all, presented and distinguished within a continuum. They form a complex, a totality; and this togetherness, as we may call it, is as much an empirical datum as the multiplicity of items distinguishable within it. Moreover, the Many are not merely "together" in passive co-existence: they are interrelated in various ways. And, again, their interrelations are not merely static: there are dynamic interactions and reciprocities. Each is affected by others, each affects others in its turn. Further, if they can be distinguished by their differences, they can also be grouped together according to their likenesses, and thus be ordered in classificatory systems. Yet again, things that are individually distinct, as well as distinct in kind, may and do, nonetheless, co-exist and coöperate in ordered wholes or structures such as we call organisms, organisations, systems, societies. These ordered wholes in varying degrees have distinctive structures and functions of their own, so that, in fact, individual things are found to compose wholes which may fairly be called individuals of a higher order.

Thus, where many distinct things are of the same kind, in virtue of a common nature which they all exemplify; or where they interact and by their togetherness make and modify the conditions for each other's existence; or where they coöperate as members of organised wholes, with division of labour for a joint and common result—in all these cases we have unity as an empirical fact, no less solid and undeniable than the fact of multiplicity. Of course, so far, we have diverse unities rather than a Unity: wholes, rather than the Whole. But, still, these various ways in which the Many are unified at any rate forbid our making the aspect of multiplicity absolute, as if there were no evidence of unity at all.

Unity and multiplicity, in fact, are correlative so far as empirical evidence goes. But, the question may still be raised, "Which is more fundamental?"

2. MONISM V. PLURALISM—LOGICAL ARGUMENTS

Philosophers appear to be agreed that unity is more fundamental, that it must rank as *logically* (not temporally) prior. This may be illustrated even from the examples of Pluralism which we have been studying in Berkeley and James Ward. Berkeley, indeed, does not explicitly consider the problem, but we may not unfairly point to the fact that his view of Nature as the "visual language" of God, and of its laws as the order and harmony imposed upon it by God, unifies the multiplicity of sense-data in God as their author. And, no doubt, as a good churchman, he would have said that the individual human spirits, which together with God compose his society of spirits, owe in some way their existence to God. The difficulties implicit here, which Berkeley did not realise, are clear, as we have seen,[1] to Ward who supplements Pluralism by Theism precisely in order to supply a unity which purely pluralistic principles could not supply.[2] In short, however much we may stress the distinctness, independence, individuality of the Many, we cannot get away from the fact that the Many, after all, are in the Universe, and that the relations, connections, identities thereby existing between them are dominant in all they are and do.

These reflections, however, still leave unsolved the all-important question, how this unity, or oneness, of Reality is to be conceived. To say that Reality is One is easy. But to explain how, or in what manner, it is One, consistently with the diversity and multiplicity within it—*that*, precisely, is the problem.

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[1] *Cf.* Ch. v, §§ 6-8.

[2] Leibniz secures unity by postulating a "pre-established harmony" between the experiences of his "monads"; Lotze by postulating a "substance" of which they are the modes.

To say that Reality is all of one stuff or substance is no solution, whatever we may conceive that stuff to be—matter, mind, life, will, or what not. For, though we do thus secure unity, viz., a homogeneous something, identical in quality throughout, we leave utterly unexplained the actual diversity of qualities, the observed heterogeneity of things, with which experience confronts us. Clearly, if the unity we seek is to make the existing multiplicity intelligible, it must be so conceived that its differentiation into the many is a necessary aspect of its very nature. It must be, by its very nature, an "identity-in-differences". The unity of diverse things interrelated and interacting or, again, the unity of a living organism with its differentiated parts, or that of a social organisation with its coöperating members, come nearer to the desired way of conceiving unity. But, ultimately, we have, probably, no better pattern on which to conceive the unity of the Universe than the unity of a self-conscious mind with itself. For, in self-consciousness not only is the self at once subject and object, knower and known, but consciousness of self implies consciousness of not-self; in other words, consciousness of objects other than one's self, of the world over against the self. Thus, the *formal* structure of self-consciousness appears to solve the problem, or, at least to come nearer to the type of unity required for its solution than anything else with which we are familiar. Nor is this all. For, under the general heading of self-consciousness we must include all those modes of experience—usually called "spiritual"—in which the self at once experiences its distinction from and also its union with the not-self or "other"; experiences in which, as in love of mate, children, country, God, the self goes out into the object of its devotion, identifying itself with that object, living for it, in it, with it, in feeling, thought, and action, and thus regaining itself enlarged and enriched and satisfied.

To have followed clues such as these in the search for the best way of conceiving the unity of Reality is the special merit of Absolute Idealism.[1] Here our sole aim in passing in review these various ways of interpreting the unity of Reality is to provide ourselves with a standard by which to judge the success, in this respect, of Spiritual Monism. In the *Epilogue,* we shall once more return to the problem of the One and the Many with the additional light which the study of further types of Idealism will then enable us to throw upon it.

3. SCHOPENHAUER'S PESSIMISM

Schopenhauer is popularly known as the outstanding prophet of Pessimism in the XIXth century, *i.e.,* as the chief apostle of the doctrine that life is not worth living, the sum of it being pain, boredom, and unsatisfied striving.

But, Schopenhauer's Pessimism is only of incidental interest for us here. For, in the first place, it is not an essential feature of Spiritual Monism, even when that Monism is built up on the concept of Will.[2] And, in the second place, however magnificent the literary skill with which Schopenhauer voices the pessimistic mood and the scathing verdict on existence which springs from that mood, there is no denying the patent fact that Pessimism, by itself, is an unstable and untenable attitude. Indeed, it may be called self-contradictory in that it can be sustained successfully only in so far as the Pessimist draws the strength and the courage to go on living from an unacknowledged satisfaction with life. A consistent Pessimist would make an end of his life. He would throw away an existence the worthlessness, nay the evil, of which he so clearly perceived. Whereas the sad truth is that Schopenhauer enjoyed being a Pessimist, and found it supremely worth while to spend a life of over 70 years in writing books explaining why life is not worth living. As Mr. F. H. Bradley wittily remarks: "Where all is bad it must be good to know the worst."[1] Certainly, Schopenhauer found it good to weigh life and find it utterly wanting. To live at all is bad, yet to live reflecting that life is bad, is good. There we have the contradiction at the heart of Pessimism. A Pessimist, who cared for consistency, would not spend his energies proclaiming the gospel of Pessimism, for, on strict Pessimist principles even the perception and advocacy of this truth cannot be worth while. Schopenhauer himself, in effect, admitted the inconsistency indirectly by providing escapes from the burden of life through art, philosophic contemplation, and religious renunciation. In other words, there are ways of living which are worth while, which are free from the curse of pain and insatiable striving. But to admit such ways of satisfactory living is to belie the condemnation of all living, as such.

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[1] See, below, Part IV, and Epilogue.

[2] See, *e.g.,* below, § 8.

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[1] *Appearance and Reality,* Preface, p. xv.

4. SCHOPENHAUER'S THEORY OF REALITY AS WILL

We shall, therefore, ignore Schopenhauer's Pessimism and concentrate our attention on his metaphysical theory of Reality as Will.

Schopenhauer's theory is based on the distinction between appearance and reality. There is the outward and visible show: and there is the inward and invisible reality. There is Nature—the tissue of objects perceived by the senses: and there is Will—the inner force at the core of every object. And this force is one and the same in all objects. There is but a single, cosmic Will, and all the manifold and diverse objects in Nature, living and non-living, are its manifestations or appearances.

How, then, do we know of this inner, invisible force which moves the whole visible show? We know it, because at one point we can peep behind the curtain . We perceive our own bodies as parts of Nature, as objects among other objects, obeying the same laws of Nature as they. But, we are at the same time also aware of Will as that in us which animates and sustains the body. Thus, the union of perceptible body and inward will in our own nature gives us the clue to the Reality behind the rest of the phenomenal world. "The act of will and the movement of the body are not two different things objectively known, which the bond of causality unites. . . . They are one and the same, but they are given in entirely different ways, —immediately, and again in perception for the understanding. The action of the body is nothing but the act of the will objectified, *i.e.*, passed into perception." [1] Thus, there are two ways of knowing ourselves: immediate *intuition* which reveals the will as the real core of our being, and *perception* which apprehends the "objectification" of the will as body. The rest of Nature is known only by perception as a world of bodies, but by analogy we interpret it as likewise a manifestation of the same force which in ourselves we intuit as will.

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[1] *The World as Will and Idea,* Bk. II, § 18, p. 130 of the translation by Haldane and Kemp.

By "Will" Schopenhauer does not mean what we are wont to call by that name, viz., a process of deliberation culminating in intelligent choice, or, at least, a desire guided by a clearly conceived end or aim. Such conscious planning, such intelligent pursuit of an object, is only a special form of will, possible only in human beings and, to a limited extent, in other animals. Elsewhere in Nature, in plants and above all in inorganic Nature, Will shows itself in its fundamental character as blind urge, unconscious striving. Even in man himself, behind all forethought and conscious planning lies this same blind urge. The intellect is only the servant, Will is the master. Consciousness is only the light which the Will has lit for itself at the highest stage of evolution. Knowledge and reason are related to the Will as the lame man with eyes in the fable, who is carried by the strong blind man. Schopenhauer, in fact, exhausts his resources of metaphor to paint this difference, and this relation, between the unconscious, unreasoning driving force in us and in Nature around us, and the conscious intellect which looks before and after. Normally, Will commands, and intellect obeys. The objects of desire which the intellect sets before us and the choices which we are wont to attribute to "reason" do but reflect the direction in which the life-force within us happens at that moment to be running. "Men are only apparently drawn from in front; in reality they are pushed from behind." [1] Again, "Unconsciousness is the original and natural condition of all things, and therefore also the basis from which, in particular species of beings, consciousness results as their highest efflorescence; wherefore even then unconsciousness always continues to predominate." Von Hartmann, another German philosopher, who was profoundly influenced by Schopenhauer, only carried Schopenhauer's language concerning the "Will" to its logical conclusion when he called it "the Unconscious".[2] In fact, Schopenhauer's Will is the same thing as Bergson's *Élan Vital,* or George Bernard Shaw's "Life-force". And by all three, the concept is extended from organic to inorganic Nature. The effect is to deny that there is any distinction in principle between what is living and what is non-living. The forces operative in the inorganic or material world—attraction, repulsion, gravity, magnetism, electricity, etc.—are by Schopenhauer explicitly declared to be identical in their ultimate nature with the will to live, with hunger, and sex, and pugnacity, in all things living. In both cases, the differences belong to the realm of appearance, of objectification of the Will. The innermost Reality is everywhere and always one and the same.

5. SCHOPENHAUER AND JAMES WARD

It is instructive to compare Schopenhauer's theory of Will and Ward's theory of Mind.[3] Both find in human nature the clue to the interpretation of the non-human world. Both extend to Nature as a whole the principle which is to them the innermost reality in man's existence. Both, thus, seek to "spiritualise" Nature and leave nothing in it that is matter without life or mind. They differ in that Ward allows consciousness and the higher functions of mind to count for more, whereas Schopenhauer throws the emphasis on the aspect of blind, unconscious urge. Thus, though both find their principle of Reality in man, yet Schopenhauer, in his characterisation of that principle assimilates man to non-human nature, whereas Ward assimilates non-human nature to man. And they differ, further and profoundly, in that Ward, as a Pluralist, seeks to maintain for individual minds or spirits a high degree of independence or self-existence, whereas for Schopenhauer, as a Monist, individuals differ only as perceptible bodies, *i.e.*, as objectifications of the Will, which itself remains identical and undivided in all of them. Lastly, Ward is a Theist whose philosophy begins and ends in God, whereas Schopenhauer is an Atheist, for whom the essence of religion is the attainment of Nirvana: the denial of, and escape from, the Will to live.

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[1] In this teaching, Schopenhauer anticipates the prominence assigned by certain modern psychologists to the rôle of instinct, and even of "The Unconscious" (Freud), in our behaviour.

[2] See his *Philosophy of the Unconscious.*

[3] See, above, Ch. v, § 2.

6. "THE WORLD AS IDEA": OBJECTIFICATION OF THE WILL

To complete our account of Schopenhauer's metaphysics, we must turn, briefly, to this theory of the "objectification" of the Will in Nature, the world of material, perceptible bodies.

Towards Nature, Schopenhauer adopts an extreme and highly simplified version of Berkeley's idealism, viz., the *esse est percipi* principle, with God left out. " 'The world is my idea'—this is a truth which holds good for everything that lives and knows. . . . What man knows is not a sun and an earth, but only an eye that sees a sun, a hand that feels an earth; the world which surrounds him is there only as idea, *i.e.*, only in relation to something else, the consciousness, which is himself. . . . No truth is more certain, more independent of all others, and less in need of proof than this, that all exists for knowledge; and therefore this whole world is only object in relation to subject, perception of a perceiver, in a word, idea." [1]

An attentive reader of this passage may well marvel at the singular infelicity which makes Schopenhauer speak of an "eye which sees a sun, a hand that feels an earth," considering that eye and hand are both, like sun and earth, physical objects and as such "ideas" existing only for a perceiver. What Schopenhauer should have said is that "seeing the sun" means really nothing but seeing a bright-golden disk in a blue expanse, the whole object existing only in relation, not to a physical act involving an eye, but to a purely mental act. However, as Schopenhauer gets his language straight in the end, this criticism may be waived. But, there is another difficulty which cuts to the root of Schopenhauer's whole system, and which appears to have escaped his notice. The whole of Nature, sea and land, plants, animals, men, is, so we have been told, an "objectification" of the Will which is, in itself, blind and unconscious. Consciousness itself is only an efflorescence of the Will in the highest forms of its objectification, viz., in animals and in man. Yet, here we learn that this whole objectification exists only as "idea," *i.e.*, as object for human consciousness. Thus, man with his consciousness was first presented to us as but a part, if the highest part, of Nature. Yet, now the whole of Nature is presented as existing but in the form of a show, akin to a dream, in human consciousness. In short, if the cosmic Will had not provided itself with consciousness, there would have been no objectification of it at all. If Schopenhauer had made his Will throughout a *conscious* Will, enacting a cosmic spectacle for its own contemplation and entertainment, his theory would have been more consistent. But, when he insists on the fundamental blindness and unconsciousness of his Will; when he regards consciousness as a subordinate efflorescence, and the inorganic world and plants as typical objectifications of unconscious Will, he follows a track of thought which is plainly inconsistent with his Berkeleyan idealism.

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[1] From the opening page of *The World as Will and Idea,* Bk. I, § 1, p. 3.

On top of all, Schopenhauer injects into the mixture a dash of Platonic Idealism. His reason is that his theory of Art requires Platonic "ideas" [1] for which, accordingly, room has to be found somewhere in his scheme. According to Schopenhauer, an object is beautiful in proportion as it exhibits most perfectly and with greatest purity the universal essence or type of that kind of thing. The artist, therefore, in his work of art, should aim, not at photographic realism in the representation of his particular subject, but at embodying the universal and ideal nature of which the particular subject may be only an imperfect example. The pleasure of art arises largely from this ideal quality which for the time being emancipates the spectator, in selfless, disinterested contemplation, from the tyranny of the Will with its ever-renewed strivings of desire. The experience is well-observed, whether correctly interpreted or not. Art, and especially the greatest art—and tragedy above all other arts—has this effect of emancipation, purification, almost of a rebirth. It does bring a deeper and truer appreciation of the essence and meaning of things. And, in general, when Schopenhauer deals with Art, he is philosophising "from the life."

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[1] *Cf.*, here, Ch. ii, § 4.

But, here we are concerned with the metaphysical basis on which he seeks to erect his theory of Art. To make room for the Platonic universals which, according to his view, the artist seeks to represent and which the lover of beauty discerns in the beautiful object, he postulates two stages in the objectification of the Will. At the first stage, the Will objectifies itself in Platonic ideas, *i.e.*, in ideal patterns or types, non-sensuous, eternal. At the second stage, it objectifies itself in the sensuous and transitory particulars the aggregate of which constitutes Nature. The artificiality of the scheme is obvious; and on the question whether the Platonic ideas exist, like the sensuous particulars, only in relation to consciousness, Schopenhauer throws no light whatever.

7. THE INADEQUACY OF SCHOPENHAUER'S SPIRITUAL MONISM

There are many sides to Schopenhauer's philosophy which we must pass by with a mere mention, as being irrelevant to our present purpose. Coming after Kant, and living as a contemporary of Hegel, Schelling, Fichte, he felt to the full the influence of the re-orientation of philosophy for which Kant, as we shall see,[1] laid the foundations, and which his successors tried to work out, each in his own way.

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[1] See Part III.

Thus Schopenhauer, like most of his contemporaries has a theory of Art, a theory of Religion, a theory of Morality. But, whilst the influence of Kant is manifest in this range of topics, he remains in his treatment of them untouched by the Kantian re-orientation of philosophy. The effect of that re-orientation, as we shall see, was to seek in man's spiritual experience the key to the nature of Reality. Schopenhauer, on the other hand, builds his theory of Reality, as was shown above, on the narrow basis of an intuitive knowledge of Will, and he frames his theories of Art, Morality, Religion so as to fit in with his theory of the Will. Thus, in morality, he advocates the virtues of unselfishness and pity on the ground that, the Will being identical in all its objectifications, I and my neighbour are at bottom one. Hence, if I oppose, injure, pain him, the cosmic Will, being the same in both of us, is divided against itself, and I suffer at bottom all the suffering which I inflict. But, further, from Will, with its ceaseless, ever-renewed, ever-unsatisfied striving, spring pain and selfishness and competition. Hence, the true blessedness is to be found in the elimination of desire, the renunciation of the fierce lust of life, the "denial of the Will." Such denial can be achieved through Art, through Philosophy, through Religion—in general, through the cultivation of a will-less, selfless attitude. This escape from bondage to the Will can be secured through the contemplation of beauty, or through philosophical recognition of the truth about the Will, or through the refusal to yield to the cravings and urgencies of desire. Thus, all these forms of spiritual experience are woven into Schopenhauer's scheme, yet none is analysed on its merits: each is forced into the mould required by the initial interpretation of the character of the cosmic Will and of its manifestations.

Moreover, if we judge Schopenhauer's Monism by the various concepts of unity which we had examined above,[1] we cannot but assign to it a low rank. His Will provides a qualitatively homogeneous principle, but this we had found to be the lowest type of unity. And, as is inevitable with so abstract and empty a principle, it contains in its own nature nothing to explain its expansion or differentiation into the actual world of our experience. There is nothing in Schopenhauer's Will to explain why it should "objectify" itself at all, or, if so, why it should do so in just those two stages. Moreover, that the very condition of all its objectifications, viz., consciousness, should make possible a turning of the Will upon itself—for, after all, a denial of the Will, where the Will is the ultimate Reality, must itself be an act of the Will—a destruction or abandonment by itself of its own inherent character: *this* is a miracle which in the framework of the theory is utterly unintelligible.

8. BERGSON'S ÉLAN VITAL AND SCHOPENHAUER'S WILL—AGREEMENTS

To affiliate Bergson's theory of Reality with that of Schopenhauer is not to deny Bergson's originality. There is no evidence of Bergson having made a special study of Schopenhauer, and the resemblance of their philosophies in certain fundamental points is a tribute rather to the way in which the same lines of thought will occur independently to different thinkers when they consider the same sets of facts, or look at the world from the same point of view.

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[1] See § 2, above.

Bergson has nothing of Schopenhauer's Pessimism, and therefore nothing of his theory of salvation by the denial of the will. He is an Optimist, rather, who believes in the fundamental creativeness of life and hopes from it ever higher perfections, not excluding even victory over death.[1] But, in its metaphysical features, Bergson's *Élan Vital* is Schopenhauer's *Will*, supported by evidence drawn from all the advances in biology, physiology, psychology, made since Schopenhauer's time, especially in connection with the theory of Evolution. Like Schopenhauer's Will, Bergson's *Élan* is known only by direct intuition. We have to apprehend the nature of life "from within," not to analyse it intellectually "from without."[2] This we can do because we are alive ourselves, because we are pulses of the cosmic life-urge. So, again, having once intuitively seized the essence of the life-impulse in ourselves, we can, by analogy, extend it to the whole of Nature, and discern everywhere its irrepressible drive, its inexhaustible fertility of new phenomena. Like Schopenhauer's Will, Bergson's *Élan* is conceived monistically as a single, all-pervading, all-sustaining energy or force, of which all Nature is the manifestation. Bergson, too, excludes from Nature anything that can strictly be called dead, lifeless, inert "matter." At the same time, Bergson's theory is vastly simpler than Schopenhauer's in that he omits all attempts at giving an account of the "objectifications" of the *Élan*. There is no borrowing of Plato's "ideas," or of Berkeley's "*esse est percipi.*" Bergson simply accepts the existence of Nature as an expression of the *Élan vital*, and in dealing with perception, or with the body-mind problem, ignores all the familiar controversies between Berkeleyan Idealists and Realists. He offers us the most direct, least complicated, one might almost say least sophisticated, interpretation of Nature, including human beings, as manifestations of a cosmic life-urge which, in creating ever-fresh novelties, is the moving power in, and the ultimate source of, evolution.[1]

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[1] See *Creative Evolution*, transl. by A. Mitchell, Ch. iii, p. 271.

[2] See *Introduction to Metaphysics, passim.*

9. BERGSON'S ÉLAN VITAL AND SCHOPENHAUER'S WILL—DIFFERENCES

At the same time, there are, alongside of these fundamental agreements, certain differences between Bergson's *Élan* and Schopenhauer's Will. Unlike Schopenhauer, Bergson regards the life-urge as conscious: "Theoretically, everything living might be conscious. *In principle*, consciousness is co-extensive with life.[2] But, this difference should not count for overmuch, for the doctrine that the *Élan* is conscious has to be qualified by the further doctrine that different kinds, or levels, of living beings exhibit very different kinds, or degrees, of consciousness. Thus, Bergson contrasts the almost material "torpor" of plants, with the rigidity of instinct in insects, and the plasticity and freedom of intelligence in the higher mammals and in man. The sense, therefore, in which the *Élan* is conscious is left ill-defined by Bergson, and approaches, at its lower end, the blindness and unconsciousness of Schopenhauer's Will.

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[1] To those interested in historical affiliations, it may be suggested that Bergson's intuitive knowledge of the *élan vital* in ourselves is his modern version of Descartes' *Cogito ergo sum*. Thus Bergson is in the French tradition in his search for an indubitable datum of knowledge which shall also be the key for unlocking the riddle of Reality. Only Bergson finds this datum rather in life than in awareness.

[2] *Mind-Energy*, p. 11. Bergson's italics.

More profound is the difference between Schopenhauer's and Bergson's treatments of the problem of the freedom of the will in human conduct. Both, indeed, agree that the cosmic Will or *Élan* is, in itself, inherently free, in the sense of being indeterminate—not bound by its nature to objectify itself, or to issue creatively, in the sort of world which we actually have rather than in any other. The relation of the Will or *Élan* to its manifestations is not to be understood on the analogy of the "necessary" relation of cause and effect according to "law" by which science takes natural events to be linked. Nor, as Bergson explicitly tells us, is the existing world to be understood as the realisation of any "purpose" or "aim" pursued by the *Élan*. But, when we pass from the cosmic *Élan* to the behaviour of individual agents in whom that *Élan* manifests itself, then we come at once upon a sharp disagreement between our two thinkers. Schopenhauer is a "determinist," upholding the principle that *operari sequitur esse*—such as a man's character (*esse*) is, such inevitably must his conduct (*operari*) be. The actions which make up the temporal sequence of his life flow with unalterable necessity from the character of the agent as a non-temporal reality. Bergson, on the other hand, rejects determinism as a point of view which falsifies and distorts the real creativeness and unpredictable originality of human action. His first book, *Time and Free Will*, is wholly devoted to a vindication of the reality of freedom against the denial of it in the name of the scientific principles of causality and necessary connection. In the main, Bergson's argument turns here on the distinction between intuition and intellect. "Intellect" is his term for the point of view of science, *i.e.*, for the way of thinking, the method of interpreting the data of experience, which we practise systematically whenever we think scientifically. Then we analyse and distinguish, instead of intuiting things integrally and as wholes (*vue globale*). Then we split up the continuity of movement into a series of distinct, static positions, just as the cinematographic camera records a flowing action as a series of snapshots each of which fixes a momentary aspect of the flux in a picture eternally motionless and at rest. So, again, the "patterns" of the intellect (*les cadres de l'intelligence*) transform "real time," or "duration," in which every present moment is big with the whole past and growing with creative urge into the future, into the "abstract time" of science which is but a string of moments, lying passively side by side along an imaginary line. Science, as Bergson vividly expresses it, "spatialises time," and "immobilises movement." In the same spirit, it conceives causality as the law of the necessary determination of the later event by the earlier, whereas the movement of life in real time is such that the past endures and is actual and creative in the present. "To exist is to change, to change is to mature, to mature is to go on creating oneself endlessly." [1] Such self-creation is unpredictable. No outside spectator could predict the thoughts or decisions of another mind, for he would have to become one with the agent in order to have all the data from which to predict. He would not merely have to know the agent and his past: he would have to *be* the agent and the agent's past. But, the agent himself does not predict his thoughts or decisions: he thinks his thoughts, he makes his decisions. The act of thinking or deciding is creative: it gives to itself determinate shape and expression. Until it has done so, there is nothing there to predict. No painter can predict the painting which is forming in his imagination or gaining reality on his canvas, just as no musician can predict the composition which is forming in his mind. For, all such forming is precisely free creation. Thus, the creative freedom of the cosmic *Élan* is present in all its manifestations. All we need to do in order to discern it is to abandon the point of view of science, of the "intellect," and seize Reality in its own character by "intuition," which is the proper method of metaphysics.

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[1] *Creative Evolution,* p. 7.

10. BERGSON'S THEORY OF MATTER

The distinction between intuition and intellect receives further light from considering the difference between, and the relation to one another, of life and matter. "Our intellect, in the narrow sense of the word, is intended to secure the perfect fitting of our body to its environment, to represent the relations of external things among themselves—in short, to think matter." [1] From this it follows, on the one side, that to conceive consciousness, or change, or motion (in their proper character as creative life) in terms appropriate to matter is to falsify them and to set up illusions. In this sense, scientific determinism and mechanism beget illusions when applied in biology or metaphysics. On the other hand, it also follows that there is a sphere, viz., the sphere of "matter," where the patterns of the intellect are rightly applicable, where there is sufficient uniformity and repetition of routine sequences for causal laws to be formulated. Yet, strictly, as we have already said, in a universe where all is

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[1] *Op. cit.*, p. ix.

Life (*Élan vital*) and the manifestations of Life, there is no room for "matter," in any sense of that term in which it means something dead, inert, lifeless—in short, the utter opposite of Life.

How, then, does Bergson derive matter from Life? By the device, which is as old as Heraclitus, of balancing the upward movement of life by a downward movement. For every upward push there is a downward fall, for every tension of movement a detension of slackening effort, for every creative urge the relaxation and listlessness of fatigue. So, again, an action which, when first performed, was fresh and original, a new achievement in doing or thinking, becomes by repetition a habit. Creative responses degenerate into automatisms. Plasticity yields to rigidity, variation to uniformity, effort to inertia.

Thus, we get matter—the burden against which Life is constantly struggling, yet at the same time a result of the very life-process itself. For Bergson, evolution is not from matter to life, but from life to matter. Matter is derivative from life, a deposit (as it were) or by-product of the cosmic *Élan*, produced by its slackening and receding from its own creations.

11. RETROSPECT AND CRITICISM

With Bergson, as with Schopenhauer, there is no denying the freshness and originality of his thought. Their philosophies express an aspect of Reality which is directly derived from their own experience, and which we can hardly fail to identify in our experience, too. But, it is another question whether they are right in making this one aspect central and in using it as the exclusive clue to the nature of the Real. And, again, we may ask whether they have really succeeded in relating the manifold details of the Universe intelligibly to their central principle.

The answer, we suggested, is bound to be negative.

(i) Both Schopenhauer and Bergson are Idealists, at least in the sense that they interpret Reality in terms of Mind. Schopenhauer's Will is obviously generalised from a familiar form of mental activity, and Bergson's *Élan*, similarly, is but the reflective generalisation of conscious activity. In our own conscious living we seize upon the cosmic Life-urge which manifests itself in all things. But, if Schopenhauer and Bergson generalise a genuine feature of mind, they do so at the cost of a vast and illegitimate simplification. Neither of them is really able to derive either the nature or the function of intelligence (or intellect) from Will or *Élan*. Still less do they attempt, let alone succeed, in explaining the "worlds" of mind [1] in terms of their principle.

(ii) Both are Monists, and in their eagerness to emphasise the identity of the cosmic Will or *Élan* in all things, they take the manifold differences in the world for granted, as if they were not deserving of philosophical attention in their own right, or as if the problem of deriving these differences from, or at least relating them to, the central principle, were negligible. Above all, they slur over and minimise the fact from which all Pluralists start, viz., the existence of individual minds, considered as so many unique and distinct centres of experience and foci of mental activity.[2] Lastly, in terms of the discussion in the opening paragraphs of the present chapter,[3] we can only say that the unity which they provide for their Universe is of the lowest type—the unity of being all of the same sort or the same stuff: an impersonal principle of homogeneity. Moreover, it is a principle incapable of internal self-differentiation. Just because Will and *Élan* are in themselves qualitatively homogeneous throughout, they leave the infinite diversity of qualities in the actual world unexplained and inexplicable.

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[1] *Cf.* here, Ch. ii, § 8 (3).

[2] See Ch. ix, below, for a further discussion.

[3] See §§ 1, 2.

Let us turn, then, to other types of idealism, and see whether they are able to extract more light on the nature of Reality from our experience, and use its resources to better effect.

PART III

CRITICAL IDEALISM

Is Idealism compatible with objective science.

How does Kant give an answer to Hume?

Knowl. for Kant comes from:-
1) sense experience
2) a priori intuitions

(a priori = independent of sense experience)

Three claims to a priori knowl.:-
1) math
2) physical science
3) metaphysics

Characteristics of a priori knowl. - universality + necessity.

Mind = sensibility - understanding - reason.

Math. - sensibility - space + time only two a priori judgments.
Space = geometry
time = arithmetic

Space + time are empirical = necessary + universal; also transcendentally ideal = forms of the mind.

physical science = understanding or faculty of judgments (Thinking for Kant is synthesis into wholes) Every judgment is conditioned by a category). (Synthetic unity is the principle of the categories, it holds them together - Kant deduces or infers this principle - it is really more fundamental than the categories themselves).

Transcendental Ego = logical subject
" Unity of Apperception = stream of categories.

Transcendental Dialectic - metaphysics
Rational psychology - paralogisms
" cosmology - antinomies
" theology - fallacies of arguments

all false - but ~~principles~~ ideas of reason are "regulative principles," Practical Reason: Ethics

Where does Categorical Imperative come from?— from itself + so freedom of the will. Idea of freedom is a postulate of practical reason, Man belongs to world of sense + also to realm of intelligent forms or noumena. * Moral action presupposes a supersensible world thru the moral will + Categorical imperative. Also brings in proof of God + immortality of the soul,

Chapter VII

KANT'S IDEALISM AS A CRITIQUE OF REASON

1. KANT'S POSITION IN THE HISTORY OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY—(i) THE "MELTING POT"

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) is, by common consent, the most important philosophical thinker of modern times. No other philosopher's works are as widely or as constantly studied. No other has left the marks of his influence on so many widely different philosophical movements. If everyone who has learnt something from Kant may be called his disciple, then there are few outstanding philosophers in the XIXth Century, either in Europe or in America, who would not have to acknowledge a disciple's debt to him.

Kant owes this central position in modern thought to two main factors.

(i) In his philosophy, there meet, as in a focus, all the important movements of thought of his time. Just as the United States has often been compared to a "melting-pot" into which have poured streams of immigrants from all countries of Europe and where they enter into new combinations of diverse promise and potentiality, so Kant's philosophy may be described as the melting-pot of the XVIIIth Century. Physics, biology, theology, ethics, politics all fed their riches into his receptive mind, which was powerfully influenced, too, by the philosophical thought of

Critique of Judgment: develops metaphysics. Reflective judgment does not explain but interprets— purpose + aesthetics— as if given to the mind by a higher intelligence, tokens of value comes from supersensible. Hierarchy of values is manifestation of a divine thinker— in thinking, God creates the world, God's thots crystallize

in the cosmic order. Cosmic order is a work of art.
This led to Absolute Idealism.

his predecessors and contemporaries, especially by the Rationalism of Leibniz, the Empiricism of David Hume, and the glorification of feeling by Jean Jacques Rousseau. As a young man Kant made contributions of no mean order to the development of physical astronomy, so that, when later he came to work at the philosophy of science, he could claim to speak with authority, as one who knew scientific thinking as a scientist knows it, viz., by having done it himself. All his life, he kept himself by constant reading abreast of all new scientific developments of his time. With these scientific interests, he combined a deeply moral and religious temperament. His earliest studies at the University were in the field of theology, and the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, and the freedom of the will, remained for him the central problems of philosophy. But neither science nor theology exhausted his range. There were also the problems of beauty, morality, political government, and of international relations, to occupy his thought and his pen. We owe to him one of the first proposals for a United States of Europe as an organisation for perpetual peace. He recognised that philosophy must draw its data from all realms of human experience, and did not forget that it must take account of feeling and will as well as of intellect. But, he also saw that this is possible only so far as there is "Reason" in each of these three, *i.e.*, so far as philosophical analysis can discover *universal* and *necessary* principles in feeling and will no less than in intellect. Such analysis Kant called *Kritik* ("Critique"), and by idealism as a "Critique of Reason" he, therefore, means a comprehensive and systematic investigation into the universal and necessary principles by which we are guided in all our feeling, willing, and thinking. Or, lest this way of putting it suggest that such an investigation was conceived by Kant as psychological, let us rather say that by "thinking" Kant, here, means natural science, or, better still, Reality as natural science thinks it to be; just as by "will" he means our concrete moral conduct as members of organised society; and by "feeling" the disinterested ("æsthetic") pleasure in what is beautiful or sublime in Nature or in Art. "Reason," then, is Kant's term for the fact that universal and necessary principles are operative in man's mind when he thinks scientifically; that other such principles determine his conduct when he acts morally; and that yet others are dominant in his appreciation of beauty. A "Critique of Reason" in these three spheres, conceived as a reflective analysis and formulation of these principles, is, therefore, a contribution to *Logic* rather than to *Psychology*. For, what Kant is analysing is not simply the way in which an individual human mind thinks, but the way in which it *must* think, if it is to know the world scientifically. So, again, he is not analysing actual conduct in all its oscillations between good and bad, but the character of actual conduct when it is also moral conduct, *i.e.*, when it is what it *ought* to be. So, finally, he tries to trace beneath all the vagaries of taste a principle which makes for objectivity in æsthetic judgment. In the language of modern philosophy, we might even express this by saying that Kant's critical analysis is not merely logical, but *axiological*, *i.e.*, it analyses actual thinking, willing, feeling, not simply as empirical fact or event, but as realising *ideal values*:—Truth (in the form of scientific knowledge); Goodness (in

Criticism of Kant:-

1). dialectic of Critique is like a boomerang - it destroys itself. It refutes itself.

2). applies categories of sense experience to world of things in themselves. no right to make this application to the unknowable.

the form of moral conduct); Beauty (in the form of disinterested pleasure in natural objects and works of art).[1]

Thus, the first factor which accounts for Kant's uniquely central position in modern thought is this vast synthesis of all contemporary culture under the concept of "Reason," which he sought to effect. Kant's philosophy is the first effort of the mind of modern civilisation to attain to self-consciousness, as it were; to take stock of its many-sided activities and to formulate the universal principles, which are at the same time ideal values, by which these activities are guided and inspired.

2. KANT'S POSITION IN THE HISTORY OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY—(ii) A FRESH START

(ii) In carrying out his "critical" programme Kant systematically avoided all Metaphysics. Leibniz and his other continental predecessors had been guilty, so he thought, of "dogmatism": they had thought by pure reasoning to determine the nature of Reality, without a prior inquiry into the possibility of such an enterprise. They had not asked, under what conditions and within what limits a theory of the nature of Reality can be successfully attempted. Consequently, their elaborate systems had been open to doubt, and their English opponents, and more particularly Hume, had developed the argument of "scepticism" to a point where it threw doubt, not only on metaphysics, but even on natural science.

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[1] Kant expressed this, in his technical language, by saying that the universal and necessary principles are *a priori.* They are "prior" to experience: *i.e.,* logically prior, in the sense that they are not generalisations from the way in which we actually think, will, feel, but define the conditions to which we conform when we have knowledge, act morally, enjoy beauty. So far as these conditions are fulfilled, knowledge, goodness, beauty are realised in what we think (judge), will (do), and feel (enjoy).

Thus Kant aimed in his Critical Idealism at a *via media* between dogmatism and scepticism, at a sober inquiry into the possibility of metaphysical speculation, at the laying of a firm basis for any fresh attempt at such speculation. His first Critique, *The Critique of Pure Reason,* was conceived in the spirit of "prolegomena to all future metaphysics."

It is important to bear this in mind, because it makes Kant's idealism altogether unique. All idealists before Kant were metaphysicians, and all idealists after Kant have been metaphysicians again, except the few who have been Kantians in the strictest sense. Hence, Kant's idealism is a type by itself, but a transition-type—a half-way house whence the human mind has launched out on fresh metaphysical ventures. Kant's advice to metaphysicians is: Look, before you leap. He, himself, looks but avoids leaping. For nearly all his successors the lure has been too great: they have leaped—and the variety of metaphysical systems that fill the stage of thought in the XIXth century, down to the present day, are the result. But, more than once, when these leaps seemed to have failed, the cry has gone forth: "Back to Kant"—eloquent witness to the fact that, though philosophers have not been content to stop where Kant stopped, he has, nevertheless, achieved a position which may be surpassed but cannot be surrendered.

No doubt, Kant had his own metaphysical convictions up his sleeve. At least, it can be plausibly argued, as has been done by James Ward in his *Study of Kant,* that Kant was, like Leibniz, a Spiritual Pluralist. Some of the features of Kant's moral philosophy certainly fit in with Spiritual Pluralism, *e.g.*, his identification of freedom of the will with the initiative of rational agents; or, again, his concept of society as a "kingdom of ends," *i.e.*, as an organisation of rational agents each of whom is obliged to treat himself and every other as an end in himself and not merely as a means.[1] But, there is no clear or decisive evidence that Kant was prepared to expand his moral theory to the dimensions of the metaphysical proposition that only spirits exist. And he certainly took special pains to dissociate his own "critical" idealism from Berkeley's "dogmatic" idealism, by which in this connection, he meant Berkeley's *esse est percipi* principle, and Berkeley's theory that sense-data are only the outward signs, the "visual language," by which God manifests himself to human spirits, and enables human spirits to manifest themselves to each other. In any case, even if Kant inclined towards Spiritual Pluralism, we know from his own words that his metaphysical views were merely his "private opinion." From this we are surely entitled to infer that what he himself valued as most essential and original in his philosophy lies elsewhere. Indeed, it is precisely the absence of a definite metaphysical bias in Kant's idealism which has enabled his successors to find in his arguments a starting-point for the most diverse metaphysical speculations. Ward, the Pluralist, and Schopenhauer, the Monist, both profess to take their stand on Kant. But, most important of all is the entirely new line of development which, starting from Kant, issued in Absolute Idealism, and of which Hegel is the chief representative. Of

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[1] Kant uses the terms "end" and "end in itself" as meaning a thing of intrinsic and absolute worth. Every rational being is an "end" in this sense.

Hegel, too, it has been argued, *e.g.*, by Dr. J. McT. E. McTaggart, in his *Studies in the Hegelian Dialectic*, that he is really a Spiritual Pluralist. But, just as the problems which chiefly exercised Kant in his three *Critiques* are far removed from the exposition and defence of Spiritual Pluralism, so no unprejudiced reader could possibly derive from Hegel's writings the impression that he was concerned above all to establish that type of metaphysical theory. Hegel is, what Kant was not—a metaphysician. But Kant gave a definitely *new direction* to philosophy, and it was by following out in his own way this new direction, that Hegel came to elaborate a new type of metaphysical idealism, different alike from Spiritual Pluralism and from Spiritual Monism.

It behooves us, therefore, to appreciate, if we can, what exactly is this new direction, this fresh start, which philosophy owes to Kant.

3. MENTAL ACTIVITY AS SYNTHETIC JUDGMENT

There is, first, Kant's treatment of mental activity on which we have already touched, briefly, in a previous chapter.[1] On Berkeley's theory, there must be acts of perceiving for sense-data, and things as collections of sense-data, to exist. But beyond this, Berkeley has nothing to tell us of the *nature* of the act. Still less does he give us an account of thinking and reasoning, of judgment and inference. Yet it is only through thinking that we can be said to apprehend, or "know," an ordered world at all. The sense-data which at any given moment we perceive are, taken thus as momentary events, mere shreds of that total world of which we believe them to be part. Applying Berkeley's own metaphor of Nature as the "visual language" of God, we might say that a given moment's sense-data are like words torn from their context in the whole sentence, and conveying by themselves nothing intelligible at all, or at best a mere fragment of God's total meaning. Just as of any spoken sentence we actually hear at any moment only a few sounds, so in the succession of sense-data we perceive at any moment just a few bits of Nature. But just as somehow we can grasp the meaning of the whole sentence, though we never hear all the words at once, so we can grasp much of the system of Nature, though only a limited selection of sense-data is at any one moment perceived by us. If we were restricted at any moment merely to what, at that moment, we actually perceive, we should be aware only of a confused mass of manifold sense-data. We should not be aware of Nature as a "world," *i.e.*, an ordered whole, and the term "law of nature" would have no meaning for us at all.

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[1] See Ch. iv., § 4.

There is, thus, a gaping lacuna in Berkeley's account of mental activity, and it is Kant's epoch-making achievement to have filled it.

Kant filled the gap by being the first modern thinker to realise that *to know is to judge.* An act of knowledge is an act of judgment. An act of judgment is an act of synthesis. An act of synthesis implies a principle of synthesis. If what we said just now is true, viz., that even for ordinary common-sense, let alone for science, Nature is not a mere stream of sense-data, but a world, a system, a whole ordered according to laws, it is not in virtue of mere seeing or hearing or touching that we thus know Nature, but in virtue of acts of judgment affirming the universal relations in which sense-data stand to each other. Let, *e.g.*, the sense-datum which I see be a brown, oval patch. I may say, "This is a table," or I may, without any words, put a book upon it. The latter action, no less eloquently than speech, reveals that I recognise the brown, oval patch for what it is; that I know (judge) it to be a table. The reader can readily verify this for himself. Let him take any colour-patch in his field of vision and ask himself, "What is this?" and the answer will reveal to him that he is never merely seeing colours, but judging each colour, or pattern of colours, to be some concrete thing. So, again, with sounds: they are not simply heard, but judged to be the sound of this or that—of the dinner-bell, of a passing motor-car, of a friend's step in the passage. Things, says Berkeley, are collections of sense-data. But rarely, if ever, is such a collection given at once and as a whole. Rather, as our examples show, we perceive at any one time only one or two members of a collection and judge from these that we are in the presence of the whole thing which, if we choose to explore it, will provide us with an endless succession of further sense-data. Thus, once more, it is only in virtue of acts of judgment that we know and identify Berkeley's "collections" from the stray members which we actually perceive. And Berkeley wholly ignores the intellectual labour of discrimination or analysis, and of combination or synthesis by which we distinguish the sense-data which go uniformly together from those which, though they may be perceived together at the same moment, have nothing to do with each other—a labour of thinking, or judging, without which not one of his "collections" would be known by us for what it is. The sentences in which we express these recognitions, or identifications, of sense-data as signs of concrete things, have a characteristic grammatical structure, viz., subject, copula, predicate or attribute. This linguistic structure expresses roughly the thought-structure, *i.e.,* the principle of synthesis implied in judgments of this type, viz., the principle (or, as Kant called it, borrowing the term from Aristotle, the "category") of thing-quality. In "this table is brown," the perceived sense-datum (the brown colour-patch) is judged to be the quality of a thing (table); and it is in virtue of this interpretation that, seeing the brown patch (the quality), I know the thing, *i.e.,* I judge it to be what it is—a brown table.

But there is another type of relation, or order, which illustrates Kant's theory of judgment as synthesis even more clearly, and which is of fundamental importance alike for knowledge and for practical conduct. Sense-data are related to each other not merely as qualities of things (in Berkeley's language, members of collections), but as causes and effects. All laws of nature are causal laws; all are of the general form: given an event, or events, of the kind, *a,* an event, or events, of the kind *b* will invariably follow. Now, laws are not simply perceived by the senses: they can only be discovered by thought. But such discovery is, once again, synthesis—a discriminative, selective thinking-together of what is thereby judged to belong together. Thus, the principle of causality is another principle of synthesis, or category, furnishing a rule for discovering order in what, as simply given, is a confused stream of sense-data passing before us.

With the details of Kant's table of twelve forms of judgment, and, correspondingly, twelve categories, we do not need to trouble ourselves. For criticism has shown that it cannot stand as Kant formulated it. But the general principle of Kant's theory is important and of lasting value. We may restate it: If we know Nature to be an ordered world of things with their qualities, and of events (*i.e.*, changes in these things) related to other events according to causal laws, it is not because such a world is simply *given* for anyone to perceive who will use his senses, but because of the *synthetic thinking* through which this order is revealed to us. These acts of synthetic thinking are acts of judgment in which we affirm of sense-data the relations in which they stand, so that the chaotic flow of sense-data is transformed into an ordered world of qualitied things, the changes in which are connected according to natural laws.

The principles of synthesis, or "categories" are an example of what Kant means by "universal and necessary" principles, *i.e.*, of the sort of fact which the "Critique" of Reason brings to light in the sphere of knowledge. We have not enumerated all the categories, nor are the categories by any means all the universal and necessary principles which Kant claims to have discovered in knowledge. There is, if Kant is right, a vast apparatus of them, in the distinguishing and naming of which Kant's love of systematisation and technical labels found ample scope. A voluminous, and largely controversial, literature has grown up about the details, in which much ingenuity has been expended, partly upon removing real or apparent inconsistencies in Kant's thought, partly upon efforts to read into, or out of, Kant's words what the critic thinks Kant ought to have said.

This jungle must be left as a happy hunting ground to specialists. For us, here, the technical details are unimportant compared with the fundamental doctrine that to know is to judge and that to judge is to interpret and order sense-data according to certain *a priori* (universal and necessary) principles.

4. IDEA, JUDGMENT, AND TRUTH

This fundamental doctrine is best appreciated by considering it in its bearing upon a problem to which Kant himself happens never to have applied it himself—viz., the problem of *truth*.

Truth is popularly said to consist in the agreement, or correspondence, of our ideas with facts (Copy-theory of truth). "Idea" is here used in Locke's sense of "object apprehended by a mind," or "object as it is perceived or thought." "Fact," then, must by contrast stand for an object "as it really is," or "as it is in itself." Now, unless we are careful, this distinction, as we have already seen,[1] will land us in an insoluble difficulty. For ideas, *i.e.*, objects-as-we-perceive-and-think-them, are all we have got. If the question of their agreement or disagreement with "facts," *i.e.*, with objects-as-they-are-in-themselves, is to have any intelligible meaning, facts must be distinct from ideas. Objects as apprehended must be distinct from objects as they are. But, as we are limited to the former, how can we ever discover whether the former agree with the latter? Thus, this theory of truth, assuming it to be true itself, implies that it is impossible for us ever to know when we actually have truth. Most of Kant's philosophical predecessors inherited the tradition of analysing our knowledge of the real world in terms of this distinction between ideas and facts, and thus were haunted, as *e.g.*, Locke was haunted, by the devastating doubt how we can know whether our ideas agree with facts, and whether there are any facts at all for our ideas to agree with. Berkeley certainly made a great step in advance when he dropped this dualism of ideas and facts, and thereby made it clear, once and for all, that we must seek for reality and truth *within* the world of our "ideas." For, this apparent limitation to ideas, *i.e.*, to all we perceive and think, is really a charter of emancipation from the fiction of a world of transcendent and inaccessible facts. It does not impose a handicap: it opens up an opportunity for boundless advance in knowledge. For, instead of distinguishing the world of facts in principle from the world of ideas, it bids us realise that every distinction between what is real and what is unreal, what is true and what is false, must be a distinction *within* the total field of what we perceive and think. This means that facts do reveal themselves to us. We are not restricted to conjecturing that they *agree* with what we perceive and think: we can recognise that they *are* what we perceive and think.

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[1] See Ch. ii., p. 7.

In short, truth is not the correspondence, or agreement, of "ideas," or objects-for-a-mind, with "facts," or objects-in-themselves. Truth is the *identity of idea and fact.* Or, put less technically, we can, and do, perceive and think objects as they really are. We can discover the nature of the real as it is in itself. For reasons which will presently appear, we call this the Coherence-theory of truth.

Of course, thus baldly stated, the coherence-theory may seem to go to the opposite extreme and to be as untenable as the copy-theory. For, whereas on the copy-theory we can never know when what we apprehend is true, on the coherence-theory, it seems, nothing we think can ever be false. If the former makes knowledge of facts as they are unattainable, the latter threatens to make error impossible by treating all we perceive and think as fact, and destroying thereby the very distinction between fact and fancy, truth and error.

Clearly, a qualification is necessary. We shall discover what it must be by reflecting that error stands revealed as error only in the light of the truth: *veritas norma sui et falsi.* Why is it false to believe that the earth is flat, or that the sun goes round the earth? Because the "facts" are that the earth is round and goes round the sun? Yes, but these "facts" are facts *as we know them*, *i.e.*, facts as we judge them to be. They are objects of thought; they are "ideas." We thus learn that what is true and what is false fall alike within the realm of "ideas," or objects-apprehended-by-minds; and their doing so, so far from making the distinction between truth and falsity impossible, alone makes it possible. A man, *e.g.*, finds he has made a mistake about his neighbour's character. He thought him dishonest and now discovers that he is "really" honest. The neighbour's dishonesty and his honesty are both objects of thought, yet the one is true and the other false. And the false was accepted as true, until the discovery of the genuine fact exposed the error. How, then, do we distinguish the genuine fact from the spurious? Only by the test of consistency or non-contradiction. We treat what we perceive and think as true so long as we have no reasons to think otherwise. When such reasons, *i.e.*, fresh evidences, are offered, they must themselves be perceived and thought and brought into relation with what we had been thinking before. What emerges as "truth" at the end of the argument is that way of "thinking together" all relevant data, which yields the largest area of mutually consistent facts. It is because of this principle of "coherence," or elimination of contradictions, which is thus operative in all our striving after knowledge, that this theory of truth is called the coherence-theory. When the total object of thought is in all its details consistent with itself, then it is *fact*, and what we think is *true*.

Kant, in his analysis of knowledge in *The Critique of Pure Reason*, never so much as discusses the problem of truth. Nonetheless, the coherence-theory of truth may fairly be said to be directly derived from his theory of judgment. This is the reason why consideration of the problem of truth helps us to appreciate the philosophical advance which Kant makes in *analysing knowledge in terms of judgments instead of in terms of ideas.* So long as knowledge is considered as consisting of ideas which correspond to facts, there is, as Berkeley clearly saw, no escaping the scepticism which lurks in the copy-theory of truth. But though Berkeley got rid of the dualism of ideas and facts, his own theory, as Hume in turn showed, escapes scepticism only by treating God as the cause of ideas. If, with Hume, we challenge Berkeley's belief in spirits, human and divine, we are left with a world consisting of nothing but a flux of ideas—a world in which there are no "things" retaining their identity through the changes of their qualities, nor any "laws" in accordance with which these changes are determined; in other words, a world without logical structure.[1]

Here Kant's theory of knowledge as judgment steps into the breach. In knowledge, whether we perceive or think, whether we remember the past or forecast the future, we always *judge.* Now, there are two important points about judgment. One is that it claims to be true. It is an assertion made with conviction. This assertive character is present even when we judge without speaking. In spoken judgments it appears in the inflexion of the voice. If we put it into words, it becomes the emphatic, "it is so," or "it is a fact that . . ." In other words, in this character of assertion judgments exhibit the principle of the identity of fact and idea—the principle that what we perceive and think is fact, is truly what we perceive and think it to be. The other point about judgment is that without the synthetic activity of thinking, strictly no "object" at all is apprehended by us; certainly, no ordered object-world of things with changing qualities and laws governing these changes. Thus Kant's achievement lies in forcing us to realise that a mere flow of sense-data does not amount even to the real world of common-sense, still less to the real world of the sciences, and that the difference between a flux of sense-data and an ordered object-world lies in the absence from the former of all those universal and necessary principles of order which Kant claims to discover through his analysis of the synthetic act of judgment. If we abstract these principles of order, the world dissolves into a chaotic stream of sense-impressions. The problem of our knowledge of the real world is solved, not by speculating about the correspondence of the objects we perceive and think to independent facts, but by analysing the principles of thought through which, in the progress of knowledge, we learn to trace in the flow of sense-data the lineaments of a logically ordered world.

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[1] See also § 6, below.

5. THE AMBIGUITY OF "MIND"

But there is one fundamental difficulty attaching to Kant's analysis of knowledge as judgment, which we have so far kept sedulously out of sight. Judgment, it may be said, implies a subject who judges. There must be a mind which is active in judging. Now, if Kant's advance on Berkeley is that he substitutes "judging" for Berkeley's "perceiving" as the correct description of the mental activity by which objects are apprehended, does it not follow that, for the object, Berkeley's *esse est percipi* should be rewritten *esse est judicari*—to be is to be judged to be so-and-so? But, this interpretation makes the object-world on Kant's theory even more dependent on mind than it had been on Berkeley's theory. For, on Berkeley's theory, the object-world is dependent on mind merely for its existence. On Kant's theory, it is dependent on mind, not only for its existence, but also for its logical structure as a world of things and laws. If we are to take Kant literally, Nature has this logical structure because, in thinking together the data of sense, mind imposes *its own* principles of order upon them and thus makes Nature what we judge it to be. And what we judge it to be, *that*, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, *it is*. The statement, sometimes put into Kant's mouth by critics, that "thought makes Nature," is not found in his writings, but it represents not unfairly the drift of much of his language. And when Kant traces all judgments to the thinking mind, which in this rôle bears the formidable titles of "consciousness as such" and "synthetic unity of apperception," the impression is deepened that Nature is what it is because "thinking makes it so"; in other words, that Nature is the product of the judgment-activity of our minds, working upon the data of sense.

Against this "subjectivist" interpretation of his theory Kant himself vigorously protested. In the second edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* he omitted some dangerously worded passages, and inserted others intended to prevent his doctrines from being thus assimilated to Berkeley's. But, the ambiguity of his language is too pervasive to be cured by a few changes. Hence, the only proper policy is to interpret Kant's language, where it is ambiguous, by his own explicit declarations against the subjectivist, or Berkeleyan, reading of his theory. This is why, in our exposition we have, so far as possible, carefully avoided Kant's own ambiguous language, and spoken rather of the "discovery" of the logical structure of Nature, or of that structure being "revealed" through thinking-together the evidences of the senses. This we have done deliberately in an effort to sort out what is valuable in Kant's theory and deserves to be held fast from what is debatable and may have to be surrendered in his language. For, what is valuable is Kant's emphasis on the logical structure of Nature. What is debatable is his tendency to say that this structure belongs to Nature because our human thinking has put it there, as though our minds were fitted out with a fixed set of synthetic principles into which, as into "forms" or moulds, they pressed the shapeless "matter" of sense-data. The recognition of the logical structure of Nature is one thing. The derivation of this logical structure from perceiving and thinking mind as its source is another.

At least, students of Kant have differed profoundly on the question of the precise sense in which "mind," or the "transcendental unity of apperception," is to be understood. According to one school, Kant's concept of mind as the source of all synthetic principles, and therefore of all logical form or structure in Nature, is valuable as a point of view, *i.e.*, as a method for fixing our attention upon the universal principles present in all the sensuous detail of Nature. Of course, "Nature," here, means Nature as an object of knowledge, Nature as we perceive and think it to be, this being the only sense which the term can intelligibly bear. The universal principles in Nature are not simply perceived; they are implicit in the way in which, in judgment, we interpret the data of sense. Philosophical reflection on what we judge Nature to be makes us explicitly aware of what these principles are. When, given a colour, we recognise a thing; when, given an event, we look for its cause, we judge Nature as Nature really is. This is, according to the interpretation of Kant which we are discussing, the point which Kant is trying to bring out. It would be a grave mistake, therefore, to think of these universal principles as arbitrary patterns imposed by human minds on sense-data. If we regard every event in Nature as having a cause, we are not merely indulging a curious mental habit of the biological species, *homo sapiens.* On the contrary, Nature really is pervaded by causal law, and, implicitly or explicitly, we follow this principle whenever, given an event, we search for another event, or group of events, which shall be its cause or its effect. It is the presence of these identical principles in the judgments of different minds about Nature which leads Kant to trace them, rather misleadingly, to "mind" as such, and to derive the unity of Nature from the "transcendental unity of apperception," or the "consciousness-as-such."

On the other hand, those who approach Kant's "consciousness-as-such" from the point of view of Spiritual Pluralism, will be interested, not in the question whether "consciousness-as-such" is a name for a set of logical principles determining all our judgments concerning Nature, but in the question whether this consciousness-as-such should be regarded as a single cosmic mind, corresponding to the unity of Nature, or whether we should conceive it as exemplified in a multiplicity of individual minds. This question, obviously, switches us back into the issue of Spiritual Pluralism *v.* Spiritual Monism, and takes us thereby clean away from the characteristically novel orientation of Kant's Critical Idealism, which consists in analysing knowledge as synthetic judgment.

6. THE "SAVING" OF NATURAL SCIENCE

If the theory of judgment as synthetic, and as resting on universal and necessary principles of synthesis, is the first and most fundamental feature in the new orientation which Kant gave to idealism, his philosophy of natural science is the second. There are two sides to Kant's theory of science. On the one hand, he strives to save science from the scepticism of Hume. On the other, he strives to "limit science in order to make room for faith." Thus, his theory is at once a philosophical justification of science against the attacks of Hume, and a philosophical restriction of it to the world of sense-perception (the world of "phenomena"). This restriction makes it possible to order science to its rightful place in human life, making room beside it for other forms in which Reason manifests itself, such as morality, religion, and the enjoyment of beauty.

It was by Hume that Kant was, according to his famous confession, "shaken out of his dogmatic slumbers." This rude awakening was brought about by Hume's denial of the concept of *necessary connection.* Science is founded on the principle of causality, *i.e.*, on the principle that every event in Nature is necessarily connected, both as cause and as effect, with other events. Every event is necessary in its time and place. No other event could have happened in its stead. Antecedent events having been what they were, present events are what they must be, and future events cannot fail to be what they will be. For, all natural events happen according to natural laws, and a law of Nature is always a causal law of the general form: If *a*, then *b*. This is the fundamental postulate of order on which all scientific reasoning and research rest. If the events in Nature are not causally connected, then science becomes impossible. Nature will then be an unintelligible chaos—a realm of pure chance, a chaos of miracles.[1]

In striking, therefore, at the principle of causality or necessary connection, Hume had struck at the very foundations of the natural sciences. What were his arguments?

Hume was one of the acutest (which does not necessarily mean one of the profoundest) thinkers of all times, a man in whom the native shrewdness of the Scotch mind was intensified by a precocity all his own. He took his arguments from the great philosophical authorities of his time and with relentless logic forced into view their sceptical implications. The arguments on which he relied were mainly two. (i) First, he adopted Locke's contention that experience, *i.e.*, sense-experience, is the only source of knowledge. In Hume's language, "No idea without an impression, of which the idea is the faint image or copy." In other words, to know anything is to have either an impression of that thing or a memory-image (idea) of a previous impression. In order to think of (have an idea of) the colour called blood-red, we must have seen (had an impression of) the colour in an actual example. Else, the word "blood-red" is meaningless for us. Similarly, if we are to mean anything by "necessary connection," we must be able to trace that "idea" back to an original "impression." Now, actual experience of events presents us with co-existence of events, or with succession, but never with necessary connection. We can observe events happening simultaneously or one after the other, but of any necessity in their relations we observe never a trace. It follows that there is no impression for this idea, no empirical foundation for our belief in necessary connection. The belief may be practically useful, but it is theoretically indefensible.

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[1] The reader will note that we are here concerned only with the *scientific* sense of causality as correlation of events according to law, not with the other sense of cause as spiritual agency. See Ch. iii., § 7.

(ii) This argument Hume backed up by another. Having taken his first argument from Locke and the Empiricist school, he took his second from Descartes and the Rationalist school. Its point is to show that abstract logic gives as little warrant for our belief in the necessary connection of events as does sense-experience. The principle of this second argument is: "All distinct ideas are distinct existences." In other words, there is nothing in the nature of any object or event which logically implies its necessary connection with any other object or event. The test of logical implication is contradiction. Would it contradict the nature of a given event if we supposed it to be followed by some other event than that which we usually call its effect? No, says Hume, for the nature of any given event does not imply as its cause or effect any one event rather than any other. It would not contradict the nature of water if we supposed that heat made it freeze and cold turned it into steam. The suggestion goes against our habit of thinking, but that habit has been formed by experience. We have constantly observed that water boils when heated, and turns to ice when chilled, and we have become accustomed to expect that it will always do so. But, this is quite different from saying that it logically *must* do so. If our supposition really involved a logical contradiction, we ought to be able, simply by reflecting on the nature of water, and without any help from experience, to anticipate what changes it must undergo with variations of temperature. Actually, no amount of meditation on the nature of water can tell us: we have to learn its behaviour from experience. To the tropical savage who has never experienced ice, the suggestion that water can become solid enough for men to walk on is the height of absurdity. Experience of a northern winter would teach him better, but experience, as little as logic, reveals any necessary connection between the facts of Nature.

Thus, Hume reduces science to habits of thought, engendered by experience, but found, on reflection, to be devoid of all justification either in empirical fact or in logic. Truly, a sweeping indictment. What is Kant's answer?

Kant meets Hume's first argument by denying that all knowledge comes from sense-experience; and his second by a different theory of logic.

(i) In replying to Hume's first argument, Kant relies on his own theory of knowledge as judgment. To know is not merely, as Hume had assumed with the Empiricists, to have sense-data and memory-images, but it is to interpret these as our points of contact with an ordered world of things, the changes in which are connected by causal law. Knowledge, for Kant, has both "matter" and "form." Its "matter" consists of sense-data; its "forms" are the synthetic principles of judgment. Kant's reply to Hume's first argument, then, amounts to this, that knowledge is *more* than sense-experience; that to treat it as simply one with sense-experience is to cut it down to what is merely its "matter;" and that any analysis of it which omits judgment and its synthetic principles is fatally incomplete.

(ii) Kant's reply to Hume's second argument rests, similarly, on his theory of synthetic principles as universal and necessary, *i.e.*, as logically implied in the nature of things as known. This point is, perhaps, best made clear by putting it, not in the language of either Hume or Kant, but in the language most familiar in present-day philosophy. We shall then say that Hume's argument that all ideas are distinct existences, *i.e.*, that no object, taken by itself, implies by its very nature any connection with any other object, involves a fallacy of abstraction. Hume, so to speak, atomizes the universe. He breaks it up into distinct objects, isolated from each other, and then fails to find in each isolated bit any evidence of the whole to which it belongs. But, suppose that, instead of framing our logic to suit isolated terms, we start with these terms in their concrete context, in the relational wholes from which they have been analyzed out, then the interconnection of terms will be the fundamental fact, and we shall have to build our logic on this fact. So viewed, the nature of any one thing will always be relative to the natures of the other things in the context in which they all co-exist. So, too, the changes in one thing will be correlated with changes in other things, so that we shall start, not with events, but with a concrete tissue of correlated events. Kant's "forms" of knowledge, his synthetic principles, are, on this view, really the relational aspects of Nature. And what Kant's second reply, therefore, amounts to is that to Hume's analytic logic which depends on arguing about objects and events in Nature as abstractly isolated and atomised, he opposes a synthetic logic which takes objects and events not as "distinct existences," but as distinguishable features within relational complexes or wholes. To say, therefore, that causality, as the general principle of all laws of Nature, is a synthetic principle is to say it is a principle of relational wholes *within* which *a* determines *b*, and *vice versa.*

7. THE LIMITATION OF SCIENCE TO "PHENOMENA"

At the same time, whilst thus "saving" science from Hume's sceptical assaults, Kant also limited its field to "phenomena," *i.e.,* to objects of actual or possible sense-experience. This doctrine has been of the greatest influence on subsequent thought, and it may fairly be said that, in one form or another, it has been adopted by almost all later philosophers, with the exception of the extreme Naturalist and Positivist schools. Perhaps the best way of expressing for us, nowadays, the point of this doctrine is to say that the field of science is "Nature," using this term to mean "what we perceive by the senses," but that Nature is studied by science from a point of view which is methodically limited to "facts," and which as methodically excludes "values." By this is meant that in science we consider natural objects and events in abstraction from their relation to our needs, purposes, ideals, feelings. We ignore the beauty which thrills us, the power which strikes us with fear and awe, the intellectual satisfaction of tracing Nature's order and law, the religious emotion which Nature evokes when beauty, power, and order are joined with mystery and immensity. Thus, Nature as considered by science is something less than Nature as interpreted in the light of those of our experiences in which we respond to the values of things.

This expresses in present-day language, and in more general form, what Kant meant when he said that he had to "limit science in order to make room for faith."

8. THE PHILOSOPHICAL "CRITIQUE" OF SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

The most startling, and for philosophy the most important, use which Kant made of this distinction between science (or "knowledge") and faith was in the criticism of "Rational Theology." With the exception of Hume, who in this matter anticipated Kant, everyone of Kant's predecessors in modern philosophy (to go no farther back) had sought to work out some proof, or proofs, of the existence of God. These proofs had ranged from the evidences of "design" in the empirical constitution of Nature to pure logical argument from the definition of God as the *ens realissimum*, the all-perfect being. Kant showed that all these attempts to demonstrate the existence of God fail. Neither the methods of reasoning from empirical facts, which we practise in the natural sciences, nor the method of reasoning from definitions, which we use in mathematics, will avail us here. If we start from existing fact, we do not reach God. And if we start from a definition of God, we do not reach existence. Thus, on either track, the arguments of Rational Theology fail to reach their goal. They are fallacious. Neither from sense-experience as such, nor from abstract logic as such, is there a path which leads to God.

But, to show that the traditional arguments fail to demonstrate the existence of God is not the same thing as to deny the existence of God. The proof that the traditional arguments for God's existence are fallacious is not the same thing as a disproof of God's existence. Knowledge fails, but faith is not only possible but reasonable. This is, in fact, how Kant interpreted the situation. Where we cannot demonstrate that there is a God, we may still have excellent reasons for believing in His existence. Kant found these reasons through a philosophical analysis of morality. And, having in the *Critique of Practical Reason* set forth his moral argument for belief in God, he went on, in the *Critique of Judgment*, to argue that the beauty of Nature, on the one hand, and the purposive structure of living organisms, on the other, suggest that perhaps the realms of scientific knowledge and of moral faith may not be utterly opposed, but that there may be an underlying unity. In throwing out this hint, Kant planted the seed destined to grow into Absolute Idealism.

In estimating the value of this line of thought, we shall do well to distinguish between the actual details of Kant's analysis, and the general principle, or point of view, with which it enriched subsequent philosophy. For, whilst the details are open to criticism, and have been largely modified and abandoned, the general principle, or point of view, has proved to be enduring and fertile.

In detail, then, Kant proceeds, as he did in his "Critique" of scientific knowledge, by looking in moral conduct, in the appreciation of beauty, and in the recognition of purposiveness in Nature, for "Reason," *i.e.,* for the universal and necessary principles which, on reflection, we find to be present in all these fields of experience. Thus, in his "Critique" of morality he distinguishes sharply between inclination (appetite, passion) and duty—between what we desire to do or like doing and what we ought to do. The analysis of duty leads Kant to the moral law for which his most famous formula is, "Treat every human being always as an end, never merely as a means." To do one's duty is to act in accordance with this principle, which is as universal and necessary in moral conduct as is the law of causality in scientific theory. Now, this consciousness of duty, of inward obligation to obey the moral law, entitles us to make as a matter of faith certain assumptions about ourselves and the world in which we have to act. These assumptions Kant calls "Postulates of the Moral Reason." They are the articles of his moral faith. There are three of them, viz., the freedom of the will, the immortality of the soul, and the existence of God. The latter is postulated because reason demands that the opposition between inclination and duty, satisfaction of desire (happiness) and obedience to the moral law (goodness), be ultimately reconciled, and this can come about only in a world ruled by God.

Similarly, in analysing the appreciation of beauty, Kant identifies its "rational" character with the factor of disinterested pleasure in the perception of pure form. And in the study of organisms he shows how we are guided by the principle that in every organism whole and parts are mutually means and end to each other.

But, whether or no we agree with these details of his teaching, we cannot refuse Kant the credit for having given to modern philosophy a new vision of its task and its opportunity. And this is the third achievement of Kant's Critical Idealism, the third new orientation which philosophy owes to him. We may describe it in general terms *as the rediscovery of the importance of man's spiritual experience* for the philosophical interpretation of Reality.

Thus to describe it is, of course, to use modern, not Kantian, terms. Kant himself was careful throughout to maintain the "critical" point of view, and to avoid all metaphysics, or theory of Reality. He was prepared to point out, in the name of "Reason," universal and necessary principles in every department of human experience—in science, in conduct, in art. He was not prepared to say that these principles were true of Reality, as such. That step, as we shall see, was taken only by Absolute Idealism.

Nonetheless, the achievement of Kant's three *Critiques* is, as we have said, to reconquer for philosophy the realms of man's spiritual experience. This is not to say that such things as morality or art had not been discussed by other modern philosophers. They had, but with a difference. Berkeley's writings on morals (*e.g., Alciphron*) are devoted to an attack upon the licentiousness of "free-thinkers" and a defence of conventional morality, rather than to a philosophical analysis of morality as such. Hume and other English writers of the eighteenth century wrote treatises on morality often abounding in shrewd observations on human nature and conduct, but such a line of thought as that which led Kant to his "Postulates of the Moral Reason," was entirely foreign to their outlook. Again, the literature of that century abounds in essays on the Beautiful and the Sublime, but few of them raise the fundamental question, what light the pleasure of beauty or the awe inspired by the sublime throw upon the Reality which yields us these experiences. What distinguishes Kant's treatment from that of all his predecessors is (i) that in every field—science, morality, æsthetic enjoyment—he applies the same method, viz., a search for universal principles, the presence of which constitutes "Reason" in that field; and (ii) that he ended by conceiving all these "critical" investigations as parts of a single philosophical enterprise. In that science was, in the course of this "criticism," distinguished from morality and art, Nature, as the object of Science, was equally distinguished from Nature as it enters, through man's bodily desires and feelings, into morality, or from Nature as revealing its beauty to the painter or the poet. Thus, Nature came to be considered as a factor in spiritual life, and as revealing in this context sides of its character which do not come into view at all when, by an act of abstraction, we consider Nature simply from the scientific point of view.

Let us take a concrete illustration of these general statements. A human act, as a movement of a human body and of its limbs, is an object of sense-perception, and belongs as such to the physical world, to Nature, as completely as the drift of the clouds in the sky, or the blossoming of a flower. It is a physico-chemical process, open to scientific observation and study, and subject to all the laws of Nature, not one of which is broken, or suspended, in its happening. Yet this is not the whole nature of the act.

As a voluntary act, it will be performed intentionally, be it for its own sake, be it as a means to an end. It may be done in obedience to duty, or, again, it may spring from unlawful passion. In any case, it will have a moral quality. Taken simply as a sensible event in the realm of Nature, nothing of this moral quality appears in the act. Nonetheless is this moral quality real; and, more, without it the full nature of the *act* is not apprehended at all. What is true of a single act is true of the agent's life as a whole. His existence is a fact of sense-perception, but the full nature of this fact is missed in so far as we fail to apprehend the spiritual life of which the perceptible behaviour is the expression. Human language, in fact, with its sounds expressive of the speaker's thoughts, feelings, purposes, awakening responsive thoughts, feelings, purposes, in the hearer, and all the time communicating objective facts from mind to mind, illustrates at once several different ways in which sensuous events may be symbols of spiritual realities. A different type of example may be found in the very act of abstraction by which, in the physical sciences, the world of sense-objects is studied as a mechanical system, without reference to life or mind, to æsthetic or moral quality, to religious response. The world of sense, thus abstractly considered, is itself a spiritual fact determined by a spiritual value, viz., knowledge. So far as the abstraction satisfies a theoretical interest, *i.e.*, so far as it enables us, within its limited sphere, to understand Nature better, just so far is it justified. But the character which objects and events in Nature, thus abstractly viewed, possess, is not their full character as it would appear if other sides of our total experience of Nature were taken into account. In other words, every "natural" science, as a system of judgments, affirms that Nature is really what, from the characteristic point of view of each science, we perceive and think it to be. But, if so, the *nature* (so to speak) of Nature is relative to the point of view and the methods of each science, and can be understood only in this context. Thus, even though science treats Nature as "closed to mind," yet this very abstraction is a spiritual phenomenon, and draws Nature into that form of spiritual life which we call scientific knowledge or theory. And, actually, Nature is not merely an object of scientific curiosity, but the scene of our conduct, the instrument of our purposes, the source, often, of æsthetic pleasure, and the occasion for religious emotions.

This illustration, and this whole line of argument, have taken us beyond Kant, but in doing so they have brought out more clearly the fruitfulness for philosophy of Kant's achievement in teaching philosophy, once again, to explore the realms of man's spiritual experience.

9. KANT'S AVOIDANCE OF METAPHYSICS

Kant himself hardly realised the full bearing of his philosophical achievement. Having gained the "critical" point of view by a recoil from the "dogmatic" metaphysical systems of his predecessors, he would not admit, even to himself, the fact that he had laid the basis for a fresh metaphysical advance. A philosophical Moses, he showed his successors the way to the Promised Land, but himself steadfastly refused to be a pioneer in new metaphysical ventures. In principle, his work contains the programme of a *synoptic* philosophy which shall show, on the one side, how the character of Reality is relative to the type of experience through which we approach it, and, on the other side, how these several types are related to each other, and what total vision of Reality, thought together, they yield. Instead of embarking on this metaphysical enterprise, Kant kept himself strictly to the critical analysis of the universal and necessary principles in each type of experience, refusing to consider how much each might reveal of the nature of Reality. Thus, he divorced science from Reality by declaring that, in dealing with objects of actual or possible sense-perception, it was dealing only with "appearances" (or "phenomena"), not with "things-in-themselves." Thus, he banished metaphysical implications from moral experience by making it rest on "postulates" and "faith." For, however "necessary" those postulates, however "rational" that faith, there is always the lurking doubt that Reality may not answer to our demands upon it. Thus, again, he bids us judge the beauty and purposiveness of Nature merely *as if* an Intelligence akin to ours were at work in Nature. No other phrase could so eloquently express the limitation to a mere point of view which must not be exploited for a positive theory of Reality than this cautious "as if. . . ." In more technical language, Kant also expressed this by saying that the points of view of morality and art have a merely "regulative" value. They serve to remind us of the limitations of the scientific point of view. They keep alive in us a sense of spiritual values. They draw us on with hints of what the solution of the riddle of Reality may be. But beyond faith and "as if" we cannot go. Thus Kant, to the last, sought to maintain the unstable equilibrium of his *Critical Idealism*—sure of universal and necessary principles in every department of human experience and thought, yet unwilling to admit that these principles might define, each within its limits, the nature of Reality which it is the function of human experience and thought to reveal.

It was left to Absolute Idealism, chiefly under Hegel's leadership, to discard these hesitations and to launch out boldly on the new metaphysical adventure to which Kant had pointed the way.

PART IV

IDEALISM AS THE THEORY OF THE ABSOLUTE

- The IDEA (all reality)
  - LOGIC (Thesis) (Logos)
    - being
      - quality
      - quantity - common-sens
      - Measure
    - essence - natural science
    - notion
      - Subjective
      - objective - philos prope
      - The idea
  - NATURE (Antithesis)
    - mechanics
    - Physics
    - Organics
  - SPIRIT (synthesis)
    - subjective (psy)
    - objective
    - absolute (art., rel., philos).

Dialectic method= thesis, antithesis, synthesis,

Hegel says reality is self-interpreting system of meanings + not a self-conscious system of experience.
Reality is both a process + a totality - This is not contradictory — e.g. mathematics.

Chapter VIII

THE DIALECTICAL METHOD AND THE ABSOLUTE

1. FROM KANT TO HEGEL

In the last chapter, we have seen how Kant's Critical Idealism gave a new orientation to philosophy, pointing the way to fresh metaphysical ventures even whilst itself refraining from following that way. Actually, these metaphysical ventures took many and varied forms. So many diverse *motifs* of thought were mingled in the vast melting-pot of Kant's philosophy, and so unstable were some of the combinations into which they had there entered, that it was easy for subsequent thinkers each to make his own selection, and to claim for the system which he built out of these selections that it represented the real truth at which Kant had aimed but which he had failed to grasp. Thus, Schopenhauer, taking his cue from Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason,* put forward his blind and irrational cosmic Will as the true interpretation of Kant's "thing-in-itself," as the Reality behind phenomena. Fichte, on the other hand, took the moral and rational Will of Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason* and elevated it to the position of being the ultimate Reality. Both these thinkers, thus, developed *motifs* taken from Kant into metaphysical theories of the type of Spiritual Monism, whereas a Pluralistic metaphysic was built up by Herbart. But, in all these developments the characteristically novel orientations of Kant's philosophy were, on the whole, neglected. It fell to Hegel, in his Absolute Idealism, to extract from Kant's novel orientations their full metaphysical significance. In doing so, Hegel interpreted the "universal and necessary" principles which Kant had analysed out of science, morality, art, as so many characterisations of the nature of Reality. Each is a way of conceiving the nature of Reality; each is legitimate, so far as it goes; each has its measure of truth. But none contains the whole truth; none defines the whole nature of Reality. Hence, the programme of metaphysics is to draw up the complete list of these ways of conceiving Reality; to define the sphere of application of each; to point out its limitations; to exhibit their interconnection within the system of Reality as a whole; to formulate, finally, the principle of that inclusive system, the "Idea" as Hegel called it, of which all the other principles are subordinate "moments." Thus, the aim of this programme is to carry out to the full that synthesis of all forms of experience which Kant had foreshadowed. They are all to be made to yield their measure of insight into the nature of Reality. But, in so far as that insight is incomplete, Reality so viewed, so characterised, ranks as "appearance." And, in so far as these insights into the nature of Reality, these characterisations of it, fall in varying degrees short of its nature *as a whole,* they are described as "degrees of truth." Thus, the guiding star of Hegel's philosophy is the all-inclusive Whole, the "Absolute."

2. HEGEL'S PHILOSOPHY IN RELATION TO ITS TIME

But, whilst Hegel's Absolute Idealism, drew its technical inspiration from Kant, it is just as important to realise that the stirring events of his Age provided him, not only with manifold materials for philosophising, but also with a powerful stimulus to attempting a philosophical synthesis. From all sides tremendous experiences were crowding in upon men, challenging their accepted beliefs, enlarging their view of the world, shaking them out of their habitual grooves of feeling, thought, and action. It was an age of intense intellectual and artistic activity. There was the "storm and stress" period of German literature which led, on the one hand, to a new enthusiasm for "classical" art and the austere purity of its forms, and, on the other, to the typically "romantic" interest in the inner life of feeling and sentiment and in all that can feed that life, from the mysticism of mediæval Christianity to the history of the nation's own language, mythology, institutions. Goethe's *Faust* is a typical picture of the spiritual pilgrimage of a soul in that age—adrift upon the stormy sea of its own conflicting impulses, blown hither and thither by one intellectual influence after the other, winning through at last to clarity and self-possession in constructive work for human welfare. Alongside of intense activity in scholarship and historical study, in literature and art, science was making the discoveries and inventions which heralded the age of steam and brought the leading nations of Europe to the threshold of the change from an agricultural to an industrial organisation of their economic life. Above all, there were the powerful spiritual forces unchained by the French Revolution, so magnificently stirring in its ideals of liberty, fraternity, and equality, so sanguinary and destructive in its immediate effects. In spite of the excesses of the revolution, minds all over Europe awoke to dreams of a better order of society, and were taught that even the most old-established institutions are, after all, perishable and can be remoulded nearer to the heart's desire. And if the French Revolution gave the decisive impulse to the development of the democratic spirit in Europe so the Napoleonic wars saw the birth of the spirit of nationality, which tapped hitherto untouched resources of patriotic loyalty and self-sacrifice in common men. It was an age abounding in great men—great generals, great statesmen, great scientists, great poets, great philosophers—hence an age of marked individualism. But, at the same time, these eminent individuals were vividly conscious of a destiny not of their own making or choosing, of being the tools of spiritual forces working through them, of which they could not grasp the full nature nor foresee the ultimate effects. They were great because possessed by something greater than themselves. Hegel's famous remark, on seeing Napoleon ride through the streets of Jena, that he had met "the world-spirit on horse-back," had a universal application. All the literary, scientific, political, religious movements of his time, no less than the great men in whom, as leaders, these movements were focussed and through whom they were carried on, seemed to Hegel so many diverse manifestations of the world-spirit.

It was this rich world of intellectual, moral, æsthetic, and religious influences which Hegel sought to interpret by an effort of thinking at once sympathetic and synthetic. In his first and most original work, the *Phenomenology of Spirit,* he analyses the various possible attitudes of thoughts towards Reality, exhibiting at once the characteristic structure of each point of view and the corresponding appearance of Reality, whilst making plain also the inadequacy of each point of view which drives us on to seek a more satisfactory standpoint. Later on, Hegel carried out his philosophical programme in detail, partly by separate treatises, like *The Philosophy of Right*, *The Philosophy of History*, *The Philosophy of Fine Art*, partly by systematic surveys, like the *Encyclopædia*. But, above all, he summed up his philosophy in his *Logic*, under which title he is really giving his general metaphysical theory of the systematic stages of the self-manifestation of the Absolute.

3. HEGEL'S CONCEPTION OF PHILOSOPHY

see p. 67

Inevitably, Hegel's philosophy includes a theory of what philosophy itself is. Indeed, the execution of so vast a programme as that of eliciting from every form of human experience its contribution to a revelation of the nature of Reality involved a new view of the nature and function of this sort of philosophising. Philosophy is reflective. Through the philosophers Reality reflects upon itself, takes stock, as it were, of itself and its achievements; becomes conscious of itself and its identity in all its diverse, and even conflicting, manifestations. For it to do so, the philosopher must throw his mind wide open to the whole realm of human experience. He must discern the spiritual forces underlying historical events. He must focus in himself the universal principles of Nature as revealed by science. He must grasp the essential nature of Beauty as embodied in works of art, and the essential nature of Right, or Law, as realised in the structure of society and in the actual conduct of law-abiding citizens. He must be responsive, in short, to the many-sided ways in which, through human institutions, civilisation, culture, the world of sense, or Nature, is made instrumental to the realisation of spiritual values. Indeed, one of the greatest services which Hegel has rendered to subsequent philosophy is that he has communicated to it his own firm grasp upon the concrete reality of human institutions, as *facts* rooted in the world of sense, yet spiritual in their proper nature. Thus, *e.g.*, a family, an army, a state are, to a spectator, visible collocations of human bodies engaged in a variety of visible interactions. But these collocations and interactions are unintelligible on the purely perceptual plane. To understand them we must grasp the relations in which the individuals stand to each other in these organisations and from which their functions, their rights, their duties, flow. We must grasp the purpose or meaning of the organisation as a whole, and how that purpose is realised through the activities of the members, each carrying out this function. We must, above all, attend to the effect of this membership upon the individuals who compose each kind of group and appreciate how its aim is to educate and moralise, even whilst it satisfies, their instinctive natures. For Hegel, it is only through membership of society that man becomes truly human. Only through society can he realise himself, and fill his life with spiritual value.[1]

4. THE "ABSOLUTE"

But we have been digressing into a particular application of Hegel's theory, and must return to its central principle —the Absolute.

In order to set ourselves right for understanding what is meant by "the Absolute," let us recall Kant's conception of synthesis, extended, however, as Hegel extended it, from the sphere of science with its synthesis of the data of sense-perception, to the whole realm of our experience, so that the philosophical problem becomes one of thinking together all different forms of experience, each taken as revealing a characteristic side, or aspect, of Reality. We may, if we like, formulate the philosophical programme of Absolute Idealism as a synthesis of science with religion, with morality, with art, and so on. But the important point is to remember that "science," here, does not mean merely "thoughts" in human heads as distinct from "facts," nor does "religion" mean merely a bundle of beliefs, and perhaps fictions, born of human imagination and the desire for a make-believe world more nearly in harmony with our fears and hopes than the actual world. No, science means *Reality from the scientific point of view, i.e., what we, as scientists, think the world to be.* To call science "knowledge" is to declare that the world, so far as science deals with it, is really what, as scientists, we perceive and think it to be. Or, again, we may say that science consists of judgments or propositions in which the real nature of the world is affirmed to be so-and-so. The idealism with which we are now dealing—and this is the first point to which to hold fast—extends this principle to all forms of our experience and thought. Thus, religion, too, into which, as a form of experience, there enter, not only the same perceptions of the world of Nature as enter into science, but also a host of feelings and emotions and desires, represents through its beliefs, doctrines, creeds, a certain view of the world, a theory of the world's real nature. *There is in religion the same claim which we find in science, the same assertion that Reality is truly what we think it to be—in this case, what we think it to be from the religious point of view, i.e.*, in the light of religious experience. In a similar way, the same principle applies to morality, to art, in fact to every systematic body of judgments through which the real nature of the world, in one of its aspects, is defined.

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[1] *Cf.*, below, Ch. x.

In interpreting these statements, the reader must bear in mind that when we speak of the "world as we perceive and think it to be," and, again, the "world as it reveals, or discloses, itself to us in our experience," we intend both phrases to mean strictly one and the same thing. For, the important principle is that our "ideas" are "facts," *i.e.*, that what we perceive and think is not different from, but identical with, the real world.[1]

Let us nail down this principle, for it is crucial for the whole argument.

The Universe is always with us, in us, around us. Every moment of experience attests its presence, is evidence for the affirmation that something exists. What exists? What is this something? To these questions all perception, all thought, all feeling, supply an answer, or, at least, the materials for an answer. Philosophy is the endeavour to elicit from these materials a revelation of the whole nature of the Universe which shall be as coherent and complete as we can obtain. What we have here called the "Universe" *is* the "Absolute," considered as the single Reality which reveals its various sides in the different forms of our experience. In the technical language of idealistic Logic, the Absolute is the single subject of all our judgments. In the technical language of idealistic Metaphysics, it is an "identity in differences." But behind these technicalities lies the plain belief that Reality reveals itself in all our experiences, and that in different experiences it reveals different sides of its nature, and these with different degrees of adequacy.

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[1] See Ch. vii., § 4.

It follows that the ideal of philosophical knowledge demands both comprehensiveness and systematisation. If we are to "think together" all the clues we have towards the real nature of the Universe, then in principle no experience may be omitted as irrelevant. The whole, if it is to reveal itself to us as it really is, demands an effort at all-inclusiveness. But, equally, it demands an effort at coherence—at the orderly interrelation, the mutual conditioning of details within a whole, which we sum up in the term "system." The most striking mark of lack of system is conflict or contradiction between the elements to be included. Hence, the demand for system is a demand for the elimination of contradictions, for thinking the Universe as a *self-consistent* whole.

5. "OBJECTIVE" IDEALISM

ideas are facts!

Are these demands for inclusiveness and consistency merely arbitrary human ideals which our minds impose upon a world whose real nature is alien to them? Are we merely weaving the manifold data of our experience into all sorts of elaborate patterns because it is the nature of our minds so to think? Are the *cadres de l'intelligence,* as Bergson calls them, like distorting glasses through which we see the real, not as it is, but as the structure of our minds makes it appear? In other words, is it conceivable that "really" the Universe is an unintelligible chaos, but that our intelligence, swayed, as Bergson would have it, by practical interests, or, as others say, by our emotions, by the desire for a kindly, protective Universe, picture to us an illusory phantom of order and harmony? Kant's treatment of the categories as the principles of the mind's own synthetic activity is, as we have seen, a standing temptation to contrast our "subjective" ways of thinking with the "objective" nature of the real. If we yield to this temptation, there can be only one conclusion, viz., the sceptical conclusion that we apprehend reality, not as it really is, but only as distorted by the nature of our own minds. This conclusion, as will be seen, is the direct antithesis of the principle on which the theory of the Absolute is based. This is the reason why, in opposition to "Subjective Idealism," the theory of the Absolute has also been called "Objective Idealism"—a name which is intended to serve as a reminder of its affirmation that "ideas" are "objects," are "facts," *i.e.*, that the real is what it discloses itself as being to our perception and thought. Hence, in keeping with this principle, we must say that in yielding to the demand for all-inclusiveness and system we are under the sway of the very nature of the Real. We must seek totality and consistency—not because it is the nature of our minds to think so and not otherwise, but *because it is the nature of the Real which obliges us so to think.* These demands do not spring from our minds as distinct from what they apprehend. They spring from *what* our minds perceive and think, *i.e.*, from the Real which is there revealing itself to us. A mind filled with the passion for exploring all realms of experience and eliciting from them a comprehensive and self-consistent knowledge of the world is precisely a mind the thinking of which is determined throughout by the nature of *what* it experiences. In such a mind's hunger for inclusiveness and in its intolerance of contradiction, the fundamental nature of the Real reveals itself. Philosophical theory, in formulating these principles of comprehensiveness and coherence, merely makes us by reflection conscious of the fact that the nature of the Real works in and through our minds, determining us to think so and not otherwise. Spinoza has a memorable phrase which we may fitly apply here: *deus sive natura quatenus humanam mentem constituit*, or, as we may paraphrase it into the language of our present argument: "Reality as focussed in the human mind."

6. "WHAT IS REAL IS RATIONAL"

One of the most challenging and most frequently misunderstood of Hegel's formulations of the theory of the Absolute is to be found in an oft-quoted statement in the Preface to his *Philosophy of Right*. "What is rational is real, and what is real is rational. Upon this conviction stands not only philosophy, but also every unsophisticated consciousness."[1] Hostile critics have fulminated against this "frightful saying which canonises the existent as such,"[2] and have accused Hegel of justifying by this sweeping pronouncement every evil, every abuse, every injustice, every Might that is triumphant over Right. Nothing, in fact, was further from Hegel's mind. Moreover, he had guarded himself explicitly against just this misunderstanding by distinguishing between "existence" and "reality." As Hegel uses these terms, they stand for two distinct points of view—ways of apprehending and conceiving the nature of what *is*—of which the former is far more shallow and less true than the latter. "Existence" corresponds roughly to "fact," as we use that word to describe the world as it reveals itself to average, everyday perception and feeling—taken, so to speak, at its face-value. "Reality," on the other hand, corresponds to the insight into the deeper nature of fact which appreciates its true nature and meaning. "The real is not another object than the existent, it is the same object more deeply understood." [1] The "same object"—yes, but transformed by fuller knowledge, viewed, it may be, in a wider context which, as we are then apt to say, "makes it appear in an entirely different light." It is, then, only the object in the light of the fullest knowledge which Hegel calls "real" and which he identifies with the "rational." He certainly does not say that anything and everything is rational, just as we, as first blush, perceive and feel it to be.

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[1] *Werke*, Vol. viii., p. 17.

[2] *Cf.* Haym, *Hegel und seine Zeit.*, p. 367.

An illustration may help to make clear the point of this distinction. Suppose we set ourselves the problem, concerning some person of our acquaintance, of defining his "real" nature—getting at "the real man," his "real self." Of course, our data include his physical appearance, his manners, his bearing, his character as revealed in his dealings with ourselves and others. But, our difficulties begin when from these data we have to think out a complete and coherent view of his "real" character. For, it is not only that we shall find many different sides to that character, and these, perhaps, to some extent, ill-harmonised with each other and mutually contradictory, but some of them will be relatively superficial, whereas others will go deep into the essence, the real quality, of the man. Throughout, we shall feel a pull away from first impressions towards a deeper and more adequate view, not to mention the fact that a man's character is not something absolutely fixed and stable and invariable, but something plastic, capable of growth, capable also of deterioration. It is one thing so long as life runs in the familiar grooves of a normal, stable setting. It is apt to reveal itself as a very different thing when exposed to a great strain, when a crisis has to be met, or when the man is stirred in the depths of his being. This is how a great modern philosopher comments on our problem: "If you set down a description of a man as he seems to be, you find that his self—what gives character to his appearance, and is needed to understand it—lies outside what you have portrayed. If you now try to define or describe, coherently and intelligently, the self of man, or indeed of anything, you find that you have got far beyond what we actually possess in our experience. For, the moment we enter upon the reflective study of man, we learn that his individuality, his self-identity lie outside him as he presents himself in time. His nature is in process of being communicated to him." [1]

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[1] H. A. Reyburn, *Hegel's Ethical Theory*, p. 65.

This example may serve to convey something of what Hegel means by distinguishing between "existence" and "reality"—a distinction without which his identification of the real and the rational would, indeed, be nothing but a grotesque paradox.

7. THE DIALECTICAL METHOD AS USED BY HEGEL

Now, an inadequate point of view, so Hegel holds, will sooner or later betray its inadequacy to open-minded reflection by coming into conflict and contradiction with the complementary and modifying aspects of its object which it had omitted and ignored. Such experience of contradiction is intolerable, at least to the philosophical mind, accustomed to "think things together." It is the ever-recurrent stimulus to the effort to find an inclusive point of view, or way of thinking, in which the contradictory elements are reconciled and made consistent with each other. Indeed, this intolerance of contradiction is the urge of the whole, the Absolute, which is present in these very elements. It gives rise to a method which Plato, who first employed it on a large scale as the distinctive method of philosophy, called "dialectic." This term is nowadays often used in a debased sense as if it meant nothing more than "logic-chopping," "hair-splitting," and, generally, idle argument about words. There are even some philosophers who, in their revulsion from Hegel's "dialectical method," look askance at the term. Hegel over-systematised the method by trying to ascend through a series of triads of concepts from the concept of bare Being to the concept of the Absolute. Each triad was composed of a thesis and an antithesis reconciled in a synthesis, which synthesis, in turn, was confronted by its antithesis, thus leading to a further and higher synthesis. These dialectical triads, so Hegel claimed, represented the necessary movement of philosophical thought just because they were necessary stages in the self-revelation of the Absolute. No thinker of the first rank, however great his debt to Hegel, has ever followed him in adopting this scheme. If we ask ourselves, What of Hegel's philosophy is living and what is dead in contemporary philosophical thinking, we must answer that what is dead is his ladder of triads. If it had ever been alive among English-speaking idealists, F. H. Bradley's withering denunciation of it as a "ballet of bloodless categories" would have sufficed to kill it.

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[1] B. Bosanquet, *Principle of Individuality and Value*, pp. 258-9.

But, if we abandon Hegel's particular system, we cannot abandon the method of dialectic in general. We may avoid the term: we cannot avoid the procedure. For, the procedure is dictated by the materials with which philosophy

Reality has 3 stages:—
1). is the Logos - world of pure conceptual forms - structure of categories - concepts - math. forms - pure concepts.
2). is nature - structure of phenomena - concepts and appearances
3). Spirit - highest form of actuality - psychic activity

has to deal—in other words, by the nature of the Real as it reveals itself through philosophical thought. A philosopher cannot but be a dialectician, for dialectic is the effort of thought to overcome the contradictions which arise in the very process of thinking together all aspects of Reality. These contradictions have their root in the fact that Reality reveals itself to us piecemeal. Whatever be the fragment of the whole that we thus meet with in a given experience, thought affirms it as disclosing in its nature something of the nature of the whole, and seeks to develop its implications, to understand the conditions which make it what it is. That fact, that aspect, fragmentary though it is, is accepted and fixed as true. But, on other occasions, other facts, other aspects, are similarly accepted and affirmed. And between these fragments of the whole truth there may, when they are first thought together, be any degree of incoherence and conflict. For philosophy, this conflict assumes its most formidable shape when it occurs as large-scale contradiction between already organised realms of systematic thought and theory. There is occasion for dialectic, as Plato showed, when a man, trying to give an account, *e.g.*, of the nature of justice, brings forward, say, the definition that justice consists in dealing with men according to their deserts, and therefore in doing good to one's friends and harm to one's enemies. But doing harm to a man is to make him a worse man, and can that ever be just ? Thus, there is a contradiction between the nature of justice, as defined, and some of the actions which that definition would justify. (The modern form of this particular contradiction may be studied in detail in the literature about prison-reform.) There is much greater occasion for dialectic when, *e.g.*, science and religion conflict, *i.e.*, when the nature of Reality as affirmed by scientific thought clashes with the nature of Reality as affirmed by religious thought. The sting of the problem lies just in this, that we cannot say that all the truth is on one side and all the error on the other, though this way out has often been tried. There is truth on both sides. Both science and religion are well-founded in the nature of things. Yet Reality cannot be ultimately at war with itself. And, thus, a reconciliation has to be sought by an examination of the conditions and limitations of each of these two conflicting thought-worlds.

Examples of such contradictions between organised systems of thought—"antinomies" as they are technically called—could be multiplied indefinitely. They occur within the realm of science, as when the mechanical theory of Nature tries, and fails, to include satisfactorily the phenomena of life and consciousness. They occur between science and morality, as when the determinism of science clashes with the moral postulate of the freedom of the will. They occur within morality, as when law confronts liberty, or when self-discipline and self-denial point one way, self-realisation and self-assertion another. Duty *v.* inclination, egoism v. altruism, asceticism *v.* self-indulgence—everywhere we meet with these antithetic ideals which carry perplexity no less into our conduct than into our thought. Again, there is a contradiction between morality and religion, for morality bids us fight to exterminate evil, whereas religion bids us regard the world as the perfect work of a perfect God. But how can we reasonably strive to better a world which is already the best of all possible worlds? There are contradictions in religious thought itself, reflecting the extreme emotional oscillations of the religious experience which ranges from the pole of complete alienation from God ("my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?") to the other pole of complete union with God ("not my will, but thine, be done"). Anyone who will critically examine the accounts which theologians give of the nature of God and of God's relation to Man and the World, will find it difficult to avoid endorsing Mr. F. H. Bradley's verdict that the idea of God is "riddled with contradictions." In fact, it is just the most distinctively "spiritual" forms of experience and thought which are most profoundly characterised by such antitheses. Matter enough, then, and urgent occasion in plenty for the exercise of dialectic.

In fact, we are now in a position to appreciate, from a fresh angle, the greatness of the philosophical achievement of Kant and Hegel, when, fairly and squarely, they brought the whole realm of human experience within the focus of philosophical reflection, and thus made us acutely and abidingly aware of the antinomies which run through it all. There is truth of some degree everywhere, but how to hold fast these divergent, and often conflicting, bits of truth in a single, comprehensive, coherent view of the All—that is the problem. More particularly, Kant, and Hegel even more clearly and consciously than Kant, faced the antithesis between what some moderns call "the world of facts" and "the world of values," or, in other words, between Nature, as a mechanical system, including in its scope even human bodies and their movements as "physico-chemical machines," and the world of Mind as concretely expressed and realised through human civilisation which, in science, art, morality, religion, in state and church and other forms of social coöperation, uses Nature to make spiritual values actual here and now. For *this* is the second insight which the concept of the "Absolute" expresses. It does not merely sum up the theory that Reality as a whole reveals itself throughout the whole range of our experience, but it affirms also that values do not dwell, unrealised, in a purely imaginary realm, but that they are real, and ever in process of being realised, here and now in this actual world of ours. To affirm the Absolute is to affirm that "real" and "ideal," "facts" and "value," are one.

8. THE DIALECTICAL METHOD AS USED BY F. H. BRADLEY

This conception of the Absolute may fairly be said to be common ground among all Absolute Idealists. But, just as no contemporary representatives of this type of Idealism follow Hegel in his rigidly "triadic" use of the dialectical method, so they differ among themselves in the way in which, the extent to which, and the materials on which, they use that method. Nothing is more instructive in this respect than a comparison of the philosophies of F. H. Bradley and Bernard Bosanquet, the two outstanding figures among British idealists at the end of the last and the beginning of the present century.

Just as Spenser has been called a poets' poet, so Bradley may be called a philosophers' philosopher. His famous treatise on *Appearance and Reality* (1892) has had few readers outside the ranks of professed students and lovers of philosophy, but it is rightly ranked by all who are competent to judge as one of the most original works of speculative thought in England. For details of its rich contents we have here no room. All that concerns us is the general principle which Bradley carries right through his argument with marvellous consistency and dialectical skill.

In outlining the argument which yields the concept of the Absolute, we had started with Kant's account of thought as synthetic and shown how this expanded into the philosophical programme of "thinking together" the evidences of the nature of the Real furnished by all modes of our experience, and, in doing so, of overcoming the contradictions everywhere arising from the fact that our experience of the Real is always, in greater or lesser measure, fragmentary and one-sided. These contradictions, or "antinomies," are the results of partial efforts at synthesis, and, in turn, provoke further synthetic thinking. Clearly, the hope here is that further thinking will resolve the difficulties which thinking itself has created. This is the point from which Bradley starts. He reminds us that thinking is not the only mode of experience, but that it differs from doing, from perceiving, from feeling—in general, from "immediate experience." Thinking is necessary, for without it experience is nothing but a mass of confused, undifferentiated feelings and impressions, melting and flowing into each other. Thinking discriminates; it identifies data in themselves different; it fixes terms and relations between them; it introduces order and system. But, in doing so, thinking destroys and loses the thrill and tang and vividness of immediate experience. In Bradley's technical language, it "divorces idea from existence, what from that." In other words, in thought we not only deal with what is not immediately given at the moment at all, but even when we deal with the moment's datum, we catch it up into a network of relations and interpretations, tearing it from its immediate context and connecting it with other terms not now immediately experienced at all. The interpretation of, *e.g.*, a colour, itself first discriminated in the mass of immediate sense-data, as the quality of a thing which has many other qualities, and undergoes many changes, not now actually experienced, is a familiar example of the work of thought. The various concepts and theories of science, erected on the basis of selected groups of immediate experiences, supply examples of a more technical kind. Now, Bradley's main contention is that all this work of thought is at once unavoidable and also ultimately self-destroying, and, therefore, unsatisfactory. Immediate experience is chaotic and incoherent: through thinking it becomes orderly and intelligible. But there is a limit to this intelligibility. For, if we do not merely accept the results of thinking, but reflect, in turn, on the methods by which thinking has achieved these results, we find these methods to be inherently unintelligible, because self-contradictory. In other words, contradiction is inherent in the very nature of thought. It is the symptom through which thought betrays to itself its radical vice—divorce from the immediacy of feeling. Hence, no thinking can, as such, reveal the nature of the Real as it actually is. That nature can be found only in a higher form of experience, not given to us humans, in which the work of thought is preserved but reunited with the immediacy of feeling which thought had lost. This higher, and to us unattainable, experience in which idea and existence are restored to union with each other, is for Bradley the Absolute, or the Absolute Experience.

It will be seen that Bradley's use of the dialectical method is very different from Hegel's. Hegel makes thought achieve ever greater self-consistency in an ascending series of syntheses. Bradley, on the other hand, whilst not denying that some results of thinking are more consistent than others and thus possess a higher "degree" of truth and reality, yet maintains that, *in principle,* no thinking, not even the best, can escape self-contradiction. For practical purposes this does not matter. The thinking on which we rely in everyday life, and even more the systematic thinking in science, in moral and social theory, in theology, are good enough to live by. But philosophy cannot be content with these "practical makeshifts." For philosophy is nothing but the attempt to carry through the demand for consistency to the bitter end. And when, in this uncompromising spirit, we reflect upon the results of the thinking by which we ordinarily live, we find that they all exhibit an inherent self-contradictoriness, and thus fall short, in greater or less degree, of absolute truth.

Bradley, thus, uses the dialectical method destructively, rather than, as Hegel does, constructively. In his *Appearance and Reality,* he passes in review all the most familiar concepts by which we usually try to make Reality intelligible to ourselves—such as thing and quality, change, activity, self, body-and-mind, goodness, God. All are weighed in the scale of self-consistency: all are found wanting. But, through all the details of this dialectical criticism, there run, for Bradley, two fundamental flaws characteristic of all thinking as such. One is that thinking is relational: to think is to break up immediate experience into a scheme of sharply defined terms and relations. For practical purposes we may be content to think *a*-related-to-*b,* but when, in turn, we reflect on this relational complex, we find ourselves driven to distinguish the relation from the terms which, nonetheless, it is supposed to unite. Thus, we must assume a further relation to connect the original relation with its terms. But the same trouble breaks out when we reflect on this fresh relation, and so on *in infinitum*. The relational scheme of thought, then, is inherently self-contradictory. And the other fundamental flaw in thought is that, being synthetic, it is always identifying differences. It takes different sense-data and calls them qualities of the "same" thing; it takes different feelings, perceptions, volitions, and declares that in all of them it is the "same" self which feels, perceives, wills, and so on. The result, once more, is practically satisfactory: it *works*. But theoretically it is indefensible and unintelligible.

All this fine-spun argument is, no doubt, far removed from ordinary, practical life, with its loves and hates, its struggle for existence, its games and enjoyments, its politics, its wars. It is nearer to, and yet still far removed from, the work of the sciences, applied or pure. If any reader thinks it idle quibbling, and makes up his mind not to apply the test of absolute consistency to the results of thought so long as they "work," he may even elevate this preference to the dignity of a philosophical principle by calling himself a "Pragmatist." For "Pragmatism" is the theory that any way of thinking which leads to successful action, which yields predictions that we can verify, which enables us to control our environment and ourselves, or even which merely effects for us a better emotional adjustment to the world, is true. The truth-value of a way of thinking consists in its rendering this sort of service. Pragmatism, in fact, starts from the "practical makeshifts" which remain over from Bradley's own philosophy when the dialectical criticism of the results of thought, with its culmination in the "Absolute," is left out. And, starting from these, it develops a theory of truth of its own which keeps thinking to its practical function of guiding and bettering the life of perception, feeling, and will in which we are immersed. The reader, then, may, if he pleases, refuse to follow Bradley and rather join company with the Pragmatists.[1] But if he chooses to follow Bradley, and to apply to all the familiar constructions of thought the test of consistency, as Bradley does, he will find it difficult to resist Bradley's conclusions. Of course, here as everywhere, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. And it is not enough to give a casual nibble and then turn away impatiently as from unpalatable fare. To appreciate the force of Bradley's argument, it is necessary to repeat his intellectual experiment—for that is what it is: an experiment in rethinking the results of ordinary thought by the standard of consistency—and to repeat it with his sustained and uncompromising thoroughness, *living* with it, so to speak, until it loses its strangeness and acquires something of the obviousness which belongs to whatever one knows at first-hand, and not merely by report. But, then, this sort of experiment interests no one except philosophers, and this is why Bradley is a philosophers' philosopher.

Anyhow, Bradley's distinctive originality among defenders of the Absolute lies in the single-mindedness with which he holds fast to two positions. One is that Reality does, indeed, reveal itself in what we think it to be. But the other is that the revelation ("appearance") of Reality in thought is inadequate, as is brought home to us by the inherent inconsistencies of thought, on the one hand, and by the contrast between it and the various forms of immediate experience (also "appearances" of the Real), on the other. The "Absolute," thus, means for Bradley the solution of this fundamental contradiction. It is that superhuman form of experience in which the order and articulation of the world as we think it to be is reunited with the vividness and thrill of the world as revealed through sense and feeling.

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[1] In the above account, I have had in mind, not only William James's *Pragmatism,* but also Dr. F. C. S. Schiller's *Humanism.*

9. THE DIALECTICAL METHOD AS USED BY B. BOSANQUET

The other example of the modern use of the dialectical method to reach the Absolute, which we have undertaken briefly to study, is that expounded by Bernard Bosanquet, especially in his two volumes of Gifford Lectures on *The Principle of Individuality and Value* and *The Value and Destiny of the Individual.* Here, again, we have no room for the wealth of detail without which the full weight of Bosanquet's argument cannot be adequately appreciated. We can note only his general method of approach and the general cast and spirit of his vision of the world.

Let us set down, at once, the goal to be reached. "The Absolute," writes Bosanquet, "is simply the high-water mark of fluctuations in experience, of which, in general, we are daily and normally aware." In the same spirit he claims that "a careful analysis of a single day's life of any fairly typical human being would establish triumphantly all that is needed in principle for the affirmation of the Absolute." [1]

These, surely, are arresting sentences. They hold out a fascinating promise. To understand what Bradley means by the Absolute, one has to undergo the toilsome experience of reflecting systematically on the difference between thought and immediate experience, and of verifying by dialectical experiment the self-contradictions which vitiate all efforts to think consistently. To understand what Bosanquet means by the Absolute all we need—though, in truth, even this demands a sustained effort of philosophical insight—is to learn to discern the Absolute as it reveals itself in the facing and solving of problems, the tensions and harmonies, the struggles and victories, of daily experience. "Dialectic," for Bosanquet, is not merely an abstruse game that a philosopher plays in his study with thoughts as counters. On the contrary, "the transmutation of experience, in accordance with the law of non-contradiction, is the principle of daily life." Here are some examples of what Bosanquet means by this "transmutation of experience." "From finding our way among mountains to moulding our daily business with a self-consistent purpose, or solving an economic problem, or discerning the reality of beauty through the appearance of ugliness, or the lovable through the apparent failings of character, we find from day to day how contradictory aspects blend into harmony as linking and distinguishing contents [= facts, or aspects of facts] come into view. . . . So far as the finite being lives a life at all, it affirms in its whole existence the principle of the Absolute. It transmutes toil into happiness by seeking it as a pledge of devotion, and pain into love by the depth of tenderness it evokes, and hardship into courage by its revelation of what a man is able to be." [1]

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[1] See *The Principle of Individuality and Value,* Chs. vii. and x., for expanded statements of this contention; also, below, Ch. ix., § 9.

Of such kind, then, according to Bosanquet, are our clues to the nature of the Absolute. We have been told now where to look and what to look for. The Absolute, clearly, must be the most familiar fact of all, present throughout the whole of our experience, and hard to discern, not because it is remote and abstruse, but only because it is so near, so all-pervading that, as it were, we cannot see the wood for the trees. It is the business of philosophy to make of this familiar fact an explicit object of attention, by crystallising it into language which will point it out to us, direct us to discern it. Of this great argument we can here select only a few samples, but we shall choose them so as to continue the topics with which we have been chiefly concerned so•far.

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[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 376-7.

10. BOSANQUET'S THEORY OF MENTAL ACTIVITY

One of these topics has been that of mental activity. Both in dealing with Berkeley's theory of mental acts as necessary to the existence of objects ("ideas"), and in dealing with Kant's account of mental activity as synthesising, by means of its own inherent principles, the material of sense-data, we had hinted that we should have to return to the subject and consider another view of what mental activity is and of what part it plays in revealing Reality to us.[1] The moment for this reconsideration has now come. We start from what we have gained. We have gained, in the first place, the insight that Berkeley's analysis of knowledge into bare acts of perceiving confronted by objects given whole and complete just as they are perceived, will not do. Berkeley's preoccupation with sense-perception leads him to neglect, not only the parts which remembering and imagining play in knowledge, but, above all, thinking and reasoning. We have gained, secondly, from Kant the insight that knowledge is thinking, in the sense of judging, and that judging is a synthetic activity—a thinking-together of the data of experience yielding a fuller revelation of the nature of the Real. We have learnt, thirdly, that there are universal principles involved in this thinking-together, but whether these principles are imposed on the data *ab extra*, as is suggested by Kant's usual language about them, or whether they are inherent in the nature of the Real which is revealing itself—this question we had left open. And, fourthly, we have learnt, partly from Kant, and more comprehensively from Hegel, that to this thinking-together the whole of our experience must contribute, and that, in truth, without the modes of experience in which we affirm, enjoy, and strive to realise spiritual values, the nature of the Real is shrunk to a poor abstraction.

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[1] See Chs. iii, § 4; iv, §§ 1-4; vii, § 3.

These four distinct steps in the development of the concept of mental activity are drawn together in Bosanquet's concept of thought, or thinking, as "the active form of totality." What this means is most easily seen when one reflects on the way in which, *e.g.*, one discovers the solution of a problem. It is done by "thinking" of course. Yet, strictly, it is not I (as thinker) who do anything. It is rather that all sorts of thoughts occur to me, some to be rejected, others to be retained, with the solution either gradually growing up in, or, perchance, suddenly flashing upon, my mind. "Not I," said St. Paul, "but God that worketh in me." Here we have the principle in a special application. We get it quite generally, and in a way familiar to everybody, when we reflect what it is that makes us say, "It came to me"; "I had an inspiration";

"The problem presented itself from a fresh angle"; "The solution dawned on me," etc. Many and varied are the phrases of current speech, such as these, which bear witness that even in our most strenuous thinking success comes, not because the soul, the self, the thinker, can in some mysterious way determine what is to be thought next or what the solution shall be, but because the problem, the situation, the object, as apprehended by the thinker, develop themselves through his thinking, determining it by an impulsion which lies in themselves. It follows that the so-called "laws of the mind," from the laws of association to the laws of logic, are laws which state how what a given mind apprehends here and now determines what it goes on to apprehend next. In other words, they are laws which formulate the nature of the Real as controlling the sequence of what a given mind thinks, and determining, as "conclusion" in theory, or as "decision" in conduct, what that mind accepts as true or as right. Thought, in a word, "is the control of mental process by the real object." When we think with the maximum of conviction, when we are most sure that what we think is truly so, just then we feel most under the compulsion of the object. Everything we are aware of supports us in thinking just so: we have no ground to think otherwise. How, then, can the object *be* otherwise? If we are not to contradict some feature or other of the relevant evidence, we must think so, we cannot think differently—hence, the object is what we think it to be. The much-talked-of "necessity" in thought springs from the nature of the real world as that reveals itself, however fragmentarily, through what a given mind perceives and thinks.

This concept of mental activity implies, of course, a correspondingly revised concept of mind. Berkeley, distinguishing acts sharply from objects, can conceive mind (spirit, self, subject) only as a centre of bare activities. Abstracted from its objects, mind, as Berkeley conceives it, is an empty thing. Kant gives positive character and content to mind by making it the seat of the categories in knowledge, of the moral law in conduct, of æsthetic pleasure in contemplation. Bosanquet, resting on Hegel, goes to the full length of treating every mind, in its kind and degree, as a "world," or, in his favourite phrase, as a "focus" in which objects meet. A creature's "world," we have no difficulty in saying, is that portion of the total Universe, that "cross-section" (so to speak) of it, which is defined by the creature's selective responses. But what else is the creature's "mind" except this selected portion of the Universe? "Response" is a term borrowed from biology. If for it we say "experience," then a mind will be what the experiences make it, which constitute it and whose sequence is its history. And, if we remember that in every experience the Real reveals some fragment of its nature, and that through the sequence of experiences there runs that active "nisus towards the whole" which, above, we recognised "thought" to be, we shall greatly lessen any difficulty we may feel about regarding a mind as a world, and about comparing different minds in respect of the range of what they thus include, or the organising power they exhibit in removing contradictions and transforming conflict into order and harmony.

11. INDIVIDUAL MINDS AND THE ABSOLUTE

If this view of what a mind is, and does, be accepted, it is not difficult to pass on to that concept of the Absolute "as the high-water mark of normal fluctuations in experience" which, a short while ago, we set before us as the goal to be reached. Two considerations, more particularly, may help us here. One is that the range and the organising power of every mind depend very largely on social intercourse with other minds. There is a give-and-take in all contact and coöperation of minds, "in which the constituent elements of them all are modified into members of the new and common mind which arises." [1] All social organisation, all community-life, whether in family, church, or state, has this effect of constantly shaping and moulding each individual mind—making it feel, think, do things which are intelligible only when viewed in the light of the particular type of social whole of which these minds are constituent members. And the same is true of the "social heritage" of science, art, philosophy, religion, of social and political traditions, loyalties, ideals. In proportion as we draw on this heritage and in our turn add to it, we break through the limits of our narrow selves and become of value to ourselves and to others mainly through our contributions to this total spiritual achievement.

And this brings us to the second consideration. This total spiritual achievement, though the work of individual minds, interacting, communicating, each using, and building on, the discoveries, inventions, theories, creations of others, has yet not been consciously planned or sought by any one or by all of them. Our industrial civilisation, our language, our science, our art, our religion—all our spiritual achievements have grown up through our individual minds in particular situations, feeling, thinking, choosing this rather than that; yet none of the contributing minds conceived or chose just what the total actual outcome is. Never was the fate of the civilised world more intensely discussed by experts from every angle than it was at Paris in the Spring of 1919. But, did the makers of the Treaty of Versailles intend, or want, the present state of Europe? Through the worlds of human minds, as generation succeeds generation in history, there run large-scale patterns and developments which determine these minds without being fully grasped or understood by them. "Each separate mind reaches but a very little way, and relatively to the whole of a movement must count as unconscious. . . . Neither Christianity nor the coral reef were ever any design of the men or the insects who constructed them; they lay altogether deeper in the roots of things." [1] The mind which awakens to this view of its place and function is led, from a fresh angle, to think of itself as an appearance of the Absolute.

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[1] See *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, p. 373.

The two following chapters will be devoted to a more detailed study of this brief sketch of Bosanquet's version of Absolute Idealism.

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[1] *The Principle of Individuality and Value,* p. 155. See there the whole of Ch. iv.

Chapter IX

BOSANQUET'S VERSION OF ABSOLUTE IDEALISM

1. THE APPROACH TO BOSANQUET'S PHILOSOPHY

In the present chapter, we are proposing to treat Bernard Bosanquet's metaphysics as a typical example of Idealism, and of Absolute Idealism, to boot. Nor is this attribution incorrect, though Bosanquet, as has already been mentioned,[1] himself expressed a preference for describing his work as "Speculative Philosophy" rather than as "Idealism." In part, this preference was grounded on the notorious ambiguity of the term "idealism"; in part, also, on the way in which labels emphasise differences rather than agreements, and obscure the extent of common ground between movements of thought which come before us as different isms. With much of what is called "Realism" Bosanquet found himself in sympathy,[2] especially in so far as Realists, too, proceed on what to him was "the true axiom of knowledge," viz., "that we can know things as they really are." [3] In fact, he welcomed all who accepted this principle as fellow-workers in the enterprise of "Speculative Philosophy."

Labels have the disadvantage that they stereotype our judgments. They betray us into dealing with a philosophical argument as if it were merely an example of a class of arguments, and not an individual achievement, which, for all its affinities to, and dependencies on, the thoughts of others is none the less the rendering of a unique and distinctive vision of the world. It is convenient, no doubt, to make up our minds about "Idealism" as such, or "Realism" as such, and thereafter to look in each book merely for the type to which it may be assigned, in order that we may dispose of it with ready-made praise or disapproval. Inferior writers who merely regurgitate the phrases of the masters deserve, perhaps, thus to be dealt with. But, the work of the great thinkers, whatever type-characters it may display, can never be exhaustively, or even accurately, summed up by, or judged on the basis of, some classificatory label. The attempt to do so will always be defeated by the irrepressible originality of such works even within the framework of a common outlook. On the other hand, the type does become a more living thing when we study it as embodied in the individual expression of it by a great thinker. And this is why it will repay us to study Absolute Idealism in the special form in which we find it stated by Bosanquet.

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[1] See Ch. ii., p. 47.

[2] See, *e.g.*, *Logic,* 2nd Edition, Vol. II, p. 276 and p. 301; also *Philosophical Review,* Vol. XXVI, No. 1, article on ***Realism and Metaphysics.***

[3] *Logic,* 2nd Edition, Vol. II, p. 309.

In our study of Bosanquet's metaphysics we shall be guided chiefly by:—

(1) His own account of what appealed to him in Absolute Idealism, especially as formulated by Hegel;

(2) His theory of the nature and function of mind as revealed to us in our own minds.

2. "A NEW CONTACT WITH SPIRITUAL LIFE"

In turning to our first topic—what appealed to Bosanquet in the idealistic movement of the past—we shall draw largely on some of his earliest writings, and especially on the small volume of his *Essays and Addresses* [1] which is all too little known to students of Bosanquet's writings, and which would not only give them added respect for his range of interests and knowledge, but which might come as a veritable revelation to many who find the style and thought of his later writings difficult and obscure.

In the "Prefatory Remarks" to this volume of essays he acclaims the "idealist revival" in Germany and England "as a return to the human and the concrete, finding its supra-sensuous world in the mind and activities of man," and as carrying with it "the organic ideas of an enlarged and purified Hellenism." He goes on to say that the so-called German idealism "originated in a human enthusiasm wholly antagonistic to remote Ontology"; and, turning to Hegel, remarks that "the recognition of the human spirit as the highest essence of things, which is a stumbling-block to those whose hearts are with the orthodoxy which Hegel revolutionised, is the true and enduring result of the epoch currently symbolised by his name." [2] There follow extracts from two letters of the youthful Hegel to the even more youthful Schelling, in which there blazes a strong feeling of antagonism to current orthodoxy and the established churches: "Religion and politics have played each other's game; religion has taught what despotism desired, contempt for the human race, its incapacity for all good, its powerlessness to be anything in its own strength." [3] By contrast, Hegel felt himself at one with Schelling and Fichte in bringing to fruition the emancipation of the human mind implicit in Kant's doctrine of the autonomy of the practical reason. Absolute Idealism, thus, appealed to Bosanquet, in the first instance, as "bound up with the humanising movement of this century."[1] How much this meant to him may be seen from a striking passage in the essay "On the True Conception of Another World":—"That the world of mind, or the world above sense, exists as an actual and organised whole, is a truth most easily realised in the study of the beautiful. And to grasp this principle as Hegel applies it is *nothing less than to acquire a new contact with spiritual life*."[2] Looking back at the very end of his life on this spiritual awakening which idealism had brought to him and his generation, Bosanquet claims that it *set philosophy free*—free, that is, from the tangle of "irresoluble antagonisms and antitheses that admitted no movement towards unity." For, in idealism, "the spiritual world had taken its place as simply the natural world understood in the fullest light, and within it especially the moral life as the natural life lived at the highest intensity and in the largest enlightenment."[3]

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[1] London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co., 2nd Edition, 1891.

[2] *Op. cit.*, pp. v, vi.

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. viii.

It is easy to see what, in this early phase of his thinking, Bosanquet owed to idealism. He owed to it, in his own words, "a new contact with spiritual life," a contact which was at once an emancipation from the galling fetters of a narrow creed and a reorientation of his whole outlook through the discovery that the highest spiritual values do not dwell apart in some "Other World," but are real and concrete here and now in the actual achievements and creations of the human mind, in art, science, citizenship—in one word, in civilisation. "Great as are the vices of civilisation, it is only in civilisation that man becomes human, spiritual, and free." [1]

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[1] *Op. cit.,* p. ix. *Cf.* on p. 48 the description of idealism as "Christian Hellenism" or "humanised Hellenism."

[2] *Op. cit.,* p. 93; italics mine.

[3] See Bosanquet's review of *The Life and Philosophy of Edward Caird,* by Sir Henry Jones and J. H. Muirhead, *Mind,* N.S., Vol. XXXI, No. 123 (July, 1922).

3. ABSOLUTE IDEALISM AND RELIGION

There is good reason to think that Absolute Idealism came to Bosanquet as the solution of grave religious perplexities. In a striking essay on "How to Read the New Testament," he says, with obvious allusion to himself: "No one can feel more acutely the extreme difficulty of reading the New Testament aright than one who has enjoyed what is ironically called a good religious education. And I have often wished, in the bitterness of my heart, that the New Testament could be buried for a hundred years, and discovered afresh in a wiser age." [2] This bitterness of heart was caused chiefly by the way in which the religious teaching under which Bosanquet had been brought up, broke up the world and human life into a conflict of antagonistic principles, admitting of no effective reconciliation here and now, but, at best, only of an imaginary victory of the one principle over the other in a far-off Beyond. In short, Bosanquet was in revolt against the dualism, or, rather, Manichæanism, which runs through so much popular orthodoxy. This world and the world to come, God and Devil, good and evil, spirit and flesh, the supra-natural and the natural—in terms of these and other similar opposites did the orthodoxy of his youth teach man to live and to think of his life. Now all this seemed to Bosanquet false in theory, false in feeling, false in conduct. In an essay on "The Kingdom of God on Earth," he bursts out against the mischievousness of the belief that in heaven, or the Other World, God will right all wrongs and compensate for all injustices in this world.[1] Admitting that this belief has been a comfort to many in distress and expresses a wild feeling of justice, nay even that "it has raised men's estimate of their dignity, and has made them feel the value of a soul," yet he accuses it of turning heaven into "a sort of poor-law," and leading men to shirk "those troublesome questions, how every member of a great nation can have a man's share in the work and knowledge of the world." "Life," he exclaims, "must not be split up into a present of endurance, and a future of enjoyment. Injustice must be redressed, beauty enjoyed, knowledge won, and goodness attained, here on this earth of ours." [2] The enthusiasm which blazes in these words, not only for social service and social reform, but for making accessible to every human being its birthright of life rich and full through participation in, and enjoyment of, the best that human civilisation has achieved, shows us the spirit of the later Victorian Age at its highest.[3] For Bosanquet, clearly, the Absolute is no cushion on which to repose during "moral holidays." On the contrary, the tendency of current religious dualisms to weaken moral effort by substituting a facile trust in God for the strenuous service of man is precisely his chief ground of complaint. *"The duties of religion,"* he says in the same essay, *"are the same as the duties of morality.* If we speak of duties to God, we mean the same duties as duties to man. Worship or prayer, in the sense of meditation, are good things if they help us to do our real duties. But it is a sad degradation of words to speak of a ceremony in a church as Divine Service." [1]

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[1] *Essays and Addresses,* p. 103. Professor A. K. Rogers is quite right when he says (*English and American Philosophy since 1800,* p. 273) that "it is this content of civilized and institutionalized culture which supplies the positive inspiration for Bosanquet's whole philosophy."

[2] *Op. cit.,* p. 161.

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[1] *Op. cit.,* pp. 108-9.

[2] *Cf.,* below, Ch. x., p. 270.

[3] If Professor A. K. Rogers had been acquainted with passages such as those quoted above, he would, surely, have qualified his statement that "Bosanquet has little but impatience with the prevalent discontent with the social structure, the crusade against political and industrial injustice, the emphasis on the right to individual opportunity and happiness". (*English and American Philosophy since 1800,* pp. 279, 280).

4. SUFFERING, SELF-SACRIFICE AND SOCIAL REFORM

It is remarkable how much Bosanquet's attitude here has in common with that of Mill. What is enduring and living in Mill's *Utilitarianism* is not the hedonistic doctrine that nothing is good but pleasure and nothing bad but pain. It is the enthusiasm for humanity—the emphasis on the feeling of human solidarity, the desire to remove the fetters of ignorance, poverty, and vice, and to bring "the things of the spirit" within reach of every man. But, whilst Bosanquet shares Mill's enthusiasm for humanity, he never whittles religion down to Mill's Religion of Humanity, nor does he confine moral effort within the horizon of meliorism.[2] The essence of religion for him, was then, as later, the belief that "nothing but good is real," and he held that this belief is the root of the most vigorous moral effort:—"nothing gives such force in getting rid of evil as this belief that the good is the only reality." [3] How much of the passionate revulsion, which characterised this stage of Bosanquet's thought, from an abstract otherworldliness and from the belief in a Deity arbitrary and remote, was due to the false emphasis of bad teaching and how much to the familiar tendency of youthful logic to construe with devastating literalness the metaphors in which spiritual truths are traditionally conveyed, it is not now possible to decide. What is certain is that the maturer understanding of later years softened the asperity of some of these early utterances, and led Bosanquet to find elements of value in much that, at this stage, he probably rejected. He never identified "God" and "Absolute" with the whole-heartedness of Josiah Royce, and to the last he uses the term "God" with a certain constraint and malaise, as if such use were liable to cause awkward misunderstandings of his position. But, in other directions, he certainly came to be reconciled to Christian doctrines which he had begun by rejecting. There is an interesting confession on this point in *The Value and Destiny of the Individual:* "When critical ideas directed against current orthodox Christianity first made an impression on my mind, it was more than anything else the doctrine of vicarious atonement, literally construed, that seemed shocking and unjust. And it was with some interest, and not without surprise, that, taking stock of one's convictions after a long development, one found that what was obviously the intention of the doctrine in question, so far from remaining the great stumbling-block in Christianity, had become pretty nearly its sole attractive feature. One had passed, I suppose, from an individualistic rationalism to an appreciation of the world of spiritual membership." [1] This last phrase—"world of spiritual membership"—is of great significance for Bosanquet's matured thought. At least, it seems to me that his deepening appreciation of the fact which it expresses brings a new note into his moral and religious teaching. We saw, above, how he rejected the popular belief in heaven as a place of compensation for the sufferings and injustices of this world, because he regarded this belief as blinding us to our obvious duty of preventing suffering and abolishing injustice.[1] But when he returns to this latter topic in *The Value and Destiny of the Individual*,[2] it is with a different emphasis. It is not that he returns to the belief in compensation in the next world, or rates the urgency of the task of social amelioration any less highly. It is, rather, that an aspect of "spiritual membership" now comes to the front which, previously had not been mentioned at all. In *Essays and Addresses* he had written: "All that we mean by the Kingdom of God on earth is the society of human beings who have a common life and are working for a common social good. The Kingdom of God has come on earth in every civilised society where men live and work together, doing their best for the whole society and for mankind. When two or three are gathered together, coöperating for a social good, there is the Divine Spirit in the midst of them." [3] This utterance is characteristic for the period when Bosanquet was chiefly concerned to combat the tendency to put God away into another world and deny to his life, here and now, any positive quality of spiritual achievement or value. In the endeavour to open our eyes to the spiritual values which are wrought into the very substance of our daily lives, he

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[1] *Essays and Addresses,* p. 125; italics mine.

[2] "Meliorism" is the name of the philosophical theory that evil can be eliminated from the Universe by moral effort.

[3] *Op. cit.,* p. 124.

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[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 147.

Hibben's
prayer!

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[1] See above, p. 249.

[2] Lecture V, on "The World of Claims and Counterclaims."

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 121.

even writes: "A visible Church, like the Church of England, or of Rome, if it is useful for good life, may be a part of the Kingdom of God on earth. *But a family, or a nation like the English nation, is a far more sacred thing than any Church, because these are what prescribe our duty and educate our will.*"[1] To the principle of the position thus laid down Bosanquet adhered to the end. In the technical language of theology, he strove to emphasise the *immanence* of God in man and the world as against a belief in God's *transcendence* exaggerated to the point of denial that the positive achievements of human civilisation here on earth have any spiritual value at all. But his insight into the true nature of man's spiritual life, the demands and even sacrifices it imposes on us, indeed the way in which the highest values come only through sacrifice and suffering—this insight would seem to have been a later growth. Technically, he expressed this deeper insight in the concept of *Negativity* as a necessary element in perfection.[2] Less technically, it came home to him in the fact of vicarious suffering as being of the essence of all spiritual identity or solidarity. "It is true," he writes in *The Value and Destiny of the Individual*, "that we *are* responsible for all possible amelioration; that the world *does* rest on our shoulders, and our finite mind *does* determine great issues by the next step that it takes . . . but it is not the whole truth."[3] The whole truth is, rather, that "on the assumption of any spiritual identity . . . all suffering of any member . . . must in principle be borne by all; and, owing to the nature of the power to endure, will continually be borne in chief measure by 'the best'—the completest, most capable, least obviously guilty members of the whole. This is an obvious and primary truth, and, on the whole, no decent man could wish it to be otherwise, for it is the principal characteristic which ennobles life and gives greatness to suffering."[1] Abstractly considered, this bearing of others' burdens may seem unjust. But it is not the sort of injustices which we can, or ought to, reform out of existence. It is, rather, the crucial example of that "negativity" of which Bosanquet claims that it is, as in tragedy, an essential feature of the highest kinds of satisfaction, and conditions the tension and exaltation of truly spiritual experiences.[2] In fact, when we boggle at such necessity for self-sacrifice as unjust, it is because we judge from the inadequate point of view of the "world of claims and counter-claims," in which, regarding men as competing units, we neglect the deeper aspect of their spiritual solidarity with all its implications, and set up an ideal of equality of burdens and rewards as our principle of distributive justice. But, for Bosanquet, this ideal not only is incapable of realisation[3] and, when we try to cling to it in spite of this, leads to moral despondence and pessimism, but—graver fault—it brings it about that "our distinctive sense of justice is divorced from our sense of

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[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 123; italics mine. *Cf.*, *ibidem*, "We judge whether a Church is a useful society just as we judge any other society. 'By their fruits ye shall know them' . . . and no church service is a duty, except in as far as it makes us better."

[2] See *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, Lecture VI.

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 140; Bosanquet's italics.

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 184.

[2] *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, Lecture VI, *passim;* and especially p. 234: "In a true typical satisfaction . . . there is always a certain exaltation which depends essentially on the fact that in satisfaction the self goes out into the other, and, though or because it becomes enriched, is beyond itself. In a word, to put the whole paradox brutally, it is undergoing an experience which logically and in its fundamental structure is one with self-sacrifice."

[3] See, on this, especially the interesting footnote, *The Value and Destiny of the Individual*, pp. 144-5.

the best."[1] To show what this "sense of the best," according to Bosanquet, requires, I will quote one more passage, the point of which may come home especially to American readers. "I have been reading, like many others, I suppose, Miss Johnson's *The Long Roll*, the terrible story of certain campaigns in the American Civil War. I might be challenged, 'Would I maintain that such things could exist in a just universe?' I am not going to answer the challenge, but to point out what I hold an absurd implication in it. Am I, an elderly gentleman almost tied to his arm-chair, to be asked to dictate the limits of heroism and suffering necessary to develop and elicit the true reality of finite spirits? Why, even if the question were, should we ourselves *like* to have taken part in those campaigns, or to take part in such struggles conceived as still future, I imagine that very different voices would be heard from different sections of mankind. And, to go deeper, take more cruel and less brilliant suffering, of which, if offered, every one would pray that the cup might pass away from him (is not this reference, indeed, sufficient for my argument?), is it not clear that finite judgment would practically always be wrong, and one would refuse what alone could recast one as a less worthless being, or what made the value of an age or a nation?"[2]

This passage is an illuminating example of the way in which Bosanquet's philosophy was, in his own phrase a "literal transcript of experience," and what kind of experience formed the stuff of his philosophising. A critic may deny that such experiences should be used and ranked as Bosanquet does use and rank them. But it is impossible to deny either the fact that such experiences do actually occur as high-tension points in most human lives, or, again, the further fact that many of the world's greatest philosophers, poets, and saints have estimated them, just like Bosanquet, as the most valuable "incidents in the development of a soul." [1] At any rate, this view of the sources of spiritual greatness in human experience is fundamental for Bosanquet's whole philosophy, and what he valued most in Hegel's idealism was precisely the affirmation of this insight. Like many of his philosophical contemporaries, Bosanquet was awakened by the study of Kant and Hegel to the spiritual poverty of the current Empiricism which, up to the latter half of the nineteenth century, had been the characteristically English contribution to European philosophy.

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[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 151.

[2] *Op. cit.*, pp. 157-8.

5. THE "ANTHROPOCENTRIC" CHARACTER OF BOSANQUET'S IDEALISM

Critics have complained that the "humanism" which attracted Bosanquet to idealism is "anthropocentric": that it treats man as the most important thing in the universe, and construes the whole universe from the point of view of its relation to, and bearing on, man. "Realists," more particularly, have protested that, so far from being central, man and his mind are relatively insignificant incidents in the cosmos. Professor S. Alexander proposes to dethrone "mind" from the false eminence assigned to it by idealism, and to reduce it, in the name of a more truly "democratic" philosophy, to its proper place among other finite things. And, in one way or another, this is the programme of all "Realists." Now, it must be admitted that idealism is, in a sense, "anthropocentric." But everything depends on the answer to the question, In which sense? "Man" and "mind" are ambiguous terms: they may be taken in so many different contexts.[1] On the whole, the tendency of Realists is to take man in a biological context, and to place him, as neither more nor less than an animal species and a late product of evolution, in an environment of which the permanent features are drawn by astronomy and geology, by physics and chemistry. But this context is not so much untrue as inadequate: it does not give us the whole truth, as little as does the context of introspective psychology. For, each context imposes its own characteristic pattern on the facts brought within its scope: it permits us to see these facts only so far as they fit into this pattern. It imposes its own distinctive valuation upon the facts. Now, the context which Bosanquet tries to hit off by the word "humanism" is the same which Hegel calls "objective mind." It is the context which Caird, and others, call "the moral consciousness," "the religious consciousness," etc., but which Bosanquet prefers to call the "world" of morals, of art, of politics, etc. This is the concrete, objective "world of mind" *par excellence*, of which Bosanquet writes: "The actual facts of this world do directly arise out of and are causally sustained by conscious intelligence; and these facts form the world above sense. The unity of a Christian church or congregation is a governing fact of life; so is that of a family or a nation; so, we may hope, will that of humanity come to be. What is this unity? Is it visible and tangible, like the unity of a human body? No, the unity is 'ideal'; that is, it exists in the medium of thought only; it is made up of certain sentiments, purposes, and ideas . . . An army, *qua* army, is not a mere fact of sense; for not only does it need mind to perceive it—a heap of sand does that—but it also needs mind to *make* it." [1] For the individual man, happiness or salvation (whichever term we choose to use, provided we mean by it the fullness and completion of what human nature may become at its best) lies in identifying himself with this world of objective mind—going out into it and filling himself with it, until, having become an organ of it, he realises at once it and himself and knows his life and work to be full of value because they help to sustain and, perchance, enrich the world of objective mind. It is easy to discern here the familiar lineaments of the characteristic movement (dialectic) of all spiritual experience—the "self" going out into its "other" and there finding its "true self"; the "self-transcendence" which is "self-realisation." This is but the technical language in which idealism renders the familiar facts of everyday human experience—the life inspired by love and loyalty towards family and nation; towards one's own work and the work of all others contributing in their diverse ways to our common human achievement; and, in religion, towards the character of perfection discerned in the universe as a whole.

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[1] R. Browning, *Preface to Sordello.*

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[1] *Cf.*, here, Ch. i., § 7.

Thus, idealism appealed to Bosanquet as "humanism" because, positively, it conquered for philosophical analysis the whole field of man's spiritual life as a concrete reality here and now, and because, negatively, it overcame the divorce of the sensuous and the supersensuous, the natural and the supernatural. To see the world of sense as an organ and symbol of the world of spirit; to see the world of spirit as the "truth" and full reality of the world of sense; to apply this insight in daily judgment on human affairs; and, not least, to translate it into the practical working-faith of moral endeavour and social reform—this was to Bosanquet the lesson and inspiration of idealism.

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[1] *Essays and Addresses,* p. 97, Bosanquet's italics. *Cf.,* also, Ch. ii., § 8, above.

6. BOSANQUET AND BERKELEY

Our second topic—Bosanquet's theory of the nature and function of Mind as revealed in our human minds—is best approached by way of his treatment of the relation of Mind to Nature (or the Physical World). Indeed, no account of anyone's idealism can afford to shirk this latter problem, if only because Realists generally concentrate the whole issue between Realism and Idealism into this one question of the independent existence of the external world.[1] Actually Bosanquet—like F. H. Bradley, J. McT. E. McTaggart, and other modern idealists—is not concerned at all with theory of knowledge in the realist sense, *i.e.*, as analysis of the "cognitive relation" with a view to disproving Berkeley's *esse est percipi* principle. He takes it for granted that Reality can be known, and is interested only in the strictly metaphysical problem of what, in the light of our experience at its best and fullest, we must judge the nature of the Real to be. Even when he is found saying, "I do not doubt that anything which can ultimately *be*, must be of the nature of mind or experience," it would be rash to jump to the conclusion that he is here endorsing Berkeley's *esse est percipi.* On the face of it, one would be inclined to infer that "to be of the nature of mind" and "to exist only as object for a mind" are two quite different things. No, Bosanquet is not a Berkeleyan, whether we

[1] See, above, Ch. iii., § 1.

take Berkeley as an epistemologist, arguing for the dependence of object on subject, or as a metaphysician putting before us a "Spiritual Pluralism," *i.e.*, a theory of the universe as a society of spirits, one of which is God, and who communicate with each other by sensible signs. There is nothing in Bosanquet's theory corresponding either to Berkeley's *esse est percipi* principle as applied to sense-data; or to Berkeley's analysis of physical things as mere "collections" of sense-data; or to Berkeley's theory of Nature as the "visual language of God." And presently we shall see that Bosanquet rejects, explicitly and emphatically, Berkeley's Spiritual Pluralism.[1] In any case, that enthusiastic study of the manifestations of the Absolute in the worlds of Nature, history, citizenship, art, morals, religion, which appealed to Bosanquet in Hegel is utterly lacking in Berkeley. For, Berkeley remains, at bottom, the militant churchman, the orthodox theist, the denouncer of the loose morals of "atheists" and "materialists."[2]

Thus, whatever other kind of idealist Bosanquet may be, he is not a Berkeleyan.

7. BOSANQUET'S THEORY OF NATURE

But, this negative result still leaves unsettled the positive question what place and function Bosanquet assigned to Nature, or the material world, in his *theory of the universe interpreted in the light of man's spiritual experience.*[3] For, this is, broadly, what he means by "idealism."

In order to appreciate Bosanquet's view of Nature, it is necessary to bear in mind the context of spiritual experience apart from which his very language is unintelligible. How else can we explain to ourselves that Bosanquet is accused by some of his critics of being a "materialist" in disguise? Even McTaggart is found on that side: "Dr. Bosanquet rejects, as is well known, the Idealism of Leibniz and Berkeley. His Idealism holds that Matter is as really existent as Mind. This renders his system in effect Dualistic. And here we find a fresh example of the rule that a system which sets out to be Dualistic has a strong tendency to end as Materialism." [1] That Bosanquet "sets out" to be dualistic is, of course, false; but that he treats "matter" (or, rather, "the material world" or "Nature") as really existent is true, subject only to the proviso that Nature is not "self-subsistent." However, "materialism" quite apart, it is something of a paradox to find the existence of the material world insisted upon within the context of a theory which, elsewhere, Bosanquet offers as "the old lesson of Hegel and his sympathisers," viz., "that the universe is a single spirit, of whom or of which all appearances are manifestations; that all its manifestations fall within a single experience, compact of experiences; that all of it is life and activity, and that outside this living experience there can be nothing." [2] The solution of this puzzle is possible only by taking as one's clue and guide the passages in which Bosanquet is speaking *propria persona*—stating his own view in his own language, straight from the life. But, further, we must remember that the problem of the relation of Nature and Mind is, for Bosanquet, double-edged. It is not possible to state adequately the character of either apart from the other; and some of the best light on Nature is to be found, as we shall see, in passages dealing primarily with Mind.

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[1] See, below, § 7.

[2] See, above, Ch. iii., § 2.

[3] Nothing less than this will describe Bosanquet's philosophical programme.

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[1] From McTaggart's review of *The Principle of Individuality and Value,* in *Mind,* N.S., No. 83 (July, 1912), pp. 421-2.

[2] From a review of books by Gentile and other Italian Neo-idealists, in *Mind,* N.S., Vol. XXIV, No. 115 (July, 1920).

This being prefaced, let us note (i) that Bosanquet does, as McTaggart says, refuse to reduce the material world to nothing more than objects or states of the human, or any, mind. The principle on which Bosanquet here relies is "that we must *perceive* as actual the distinctions which give life its content."[1] Hence, it is a mistake to treat the material objects which make up our environment, or our own bodies, as assemblages of spirits of a lower order. "Why insist," he urges elsewhere, "on reducing to a homogeneous type the contributions of all elements to the whole? What becomes of the material incidents of life—of our food, our clothes, our country, our bodies? Is it not obvious that our relation to these things is essential to finite being, and that if they are in addition subjective psychical centres their subjective psychical quality is one which so far as realised would destroy their function and character for us?"[2] In fact, "there cannot be spirit . . . constituted by nothing but pure spiritual centres."[3] This, then, is one point to which we must hold fast.

(ii) The second point concerns the finite mind and is complementary to the first. Bosanquet explicitly accepts the view that human minds are late-comers in evolution and presuppose both an external environment and a complex and highly-organised physical body.[4] This is—

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[1] *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, p. 240; italics mine.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 363.

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 240.

[4] *Cf.*, *e.g.*, *op. cit.*, p. 157: "The conscious self is plainly the last word of an immense evolution which is practically and relatively from unconsciousness to consciousness." And p. 178, "Hegel's 'actual soul' is the perfection of a living body highly trained and definitely habituated."

we must note—part of his general thesis "that it is the true spiritual view which regards Nature as mechanically intelligible."[1] Thus, Nature as a mechanical system, including human bodies as largely automatic in their reactions, is definitely accepted by Bosanquet as conditioning the emergence and effectiveness of conscious minds.

(iii) Thirdly, we must notice, for the building up of Bosanquet's total view, a significant revision of his treatment of "consciousness." Where previously he had assigned to "conscious intelligence" the highest rank among phenomena, he now recognises that the "worlds" of spiritual values through participation in which we realise our true selves, largely transcend what can fairly be said to fall within the consciousness of any single mind.[2] I refer to the striking doctrine that there is not only a "teleology below finite consciousness," but that there is also a "teleology above finite consciousness."[3] By the former phrase Bosanquet means the way in which the routine of our bodily life is carried on by inherited organisation and automatic process, without conscious will or intelligent control. By the latter he means "that there are problems which civilised man actually solves from day to day, which are, as a whole, beyond the grasp of conscious intelligence, and cannot be dealt with except by a conjunction of consciousnesses only in part determined by their consciousness."[4] Thus, there are for Bosanquet two sides to the life of every finite mind. It is, on the one hand, conditioned by a body and by the physical scheme of which that body forms part.

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[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 140.

[2] In order to appreciate the extent of this revision, compare what follows with such a passage as that quoted above.

[3] *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, pp. 153 ff. *Cf.*, also, p. 143.

[4] *Op. cit.*, p. 143. *Cf.*, also, Ch. viii., § 11, p. 242, above.

And, on the other hand, what it is conscious of is a mere fragment of the wider objective universe. The actual contents of every mind have implications which transcend the limits of what falls within its consciousness, but yet determine essentially the nature and connections of the contents in consciousness. In short, the "objective worlds of mind," in the affirmation of which consists, as we saw, for Bosanquet the distinctive value of idealism, are rooted in the whole nature of the Universe, rather than that they are merely creations which human minds bring into existence out of their own power. Or, if we choose to say that human minds create them, we must add that, in doing so, they are building better than they know. In short, they are creative only as organs of the Absolute. This is how the "humanism" of Bosanquet's earlier position grows into the "absolutism" of his Gifford Lectures.

8. BOSANQUET'S THEORY OF MIND

If this be granted, it is a comparatively easy step into the core of Bosanquet's theory of the relation of Mind to Nature. Students with "realist" inclinations may be assisted at this point by the suggestion, paradoxical as it may seem, that Bosanquet's view has not a little in common with E. B. Holt's concept of mind as a "cross-section" of the objective world, and with S. Alexander's concept of mind as a new quality of perfection supervening upon complex physical conditions. Of course, there is something more as well, something distinctive of Bosanquet's position, viz., the concept of mind as the "active form of totality,"[1] but none the less the affinities of his view to well-known realist theories are most striking. With both

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[1] See here, Ch. viii., § 10, above.

Holt and Alexander, Bosanquet rejects the dualistic view that body and mind, or matter and spirit, are two diverse and separable substances. In the same spirit, he protests against the traditional way of treating the fields of physiology and psychology as mutually exclusive, and admitting of correlation only through such an artificial device as the hypothesis of psycho-physical parallelism.[1] His theory of Mind is eminently "functional." It agrees with Holt's cross-section view in holding that Mind draws all its "content" from Nature. Mind has no special "filling" or equipment of its own— not even *a priori* principles of knowledge or of morality—which it could add to, or in a synthesis *ab extra* impose upon, Nature. Its "logic," like its "freedom" or "initiative," springs from, as it is rooted in, the content which comes together or is concentrated into a mind. In Bosanquet's favourite phrases: Mind is "a world," or "a centre of a world." It is a "focus" of content which, even as thus focussed, still continues to retain its connections with the total context of Nature. Undeniable, then, is the affinity of the concepts of mind as a focus of content drawn from the universe, and mind as a selective cross-section of the universe. But more, the appearance of such foci is not a mere otiose epiphenomenon but a "super-venient perfection." In the appearance of consciousness and self-consciousness Nature reaps the final and supreme result, not only of all the complex adaptations of the bodily organism, but even of its whole character as a mechanical system. "The content of mind is the content of Nature because Nature is the instrument or element of the Absolute by which the mind's own 'nature' is communicated to it. On the other hand, the content of Nature is the content of mind, because it is only in the sphere of mind that Nature, to begin with, reveals anything at all, and *a fortiori*, that she reveals the possibilities of life and spirituality that are shut up within her . . . Mind has nothing of its own but the active form of totality; everything positive it draws from Nature." [1]

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[1] See, *e.g.*, *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, p. 187, and, in general, Chs. v. and x.

9. THE HUMAN MIND AND THE ABSOLUTE

From this it is not a far step, finally, to the Absolute. For a mind is a "world," fragmentary, no doubt, and, so far, a selective cross-section, but displaying its character as a world by the constant nisus of its contents to organise themselves into the completest whole possible, which nisus is mental activity. Now, mind in this sense is a power, or quality, or function—whatever we choose to call it—of which there may be less or more in every conceivable degree. It fluctuates both in range and in extensiveness, and it does so both from man to man and at different times within the same man. A comparison of these fluctuations yields our standards of truth, beauty, goodness. And the principle which we discern when, through such comparisons, we come to see how the whole is more fully realised in one mind than in another is—the Absolute. For, "the Absolute," as we have seen in the previous chapter, is simply "the high-water mark of fluctuations in experience, of which, in general, we are daily and normally aware." [2]

Bosanquet's view of Nature, Mind, and the Absolute has an originality all its own. True, it does not move towards its goal with the steady triadic movement of Hegel's dialectic, nor, again, does it, like Bradley's, rely on the reiterated and relentless application of the single principle of contradiction to all products of thought. Compared with these, Bosanquet's metaphysical argument is apt to strike the reader as impressionistic, formless, even chaotic. Yet there is method in his procedure. Few modern philosophers draw the data for their philosophising from so wide a range, or represent, in the multitude of their contacts, so nearly a microcosm of contemporary civilisation. From philosophical tradition, from science, from literature, from art, from social work, from politics, from religion—from all these Bosanquet seeks to support his total conclusion. All these, in profusion, he puts before us in the hope that our minds, thus widely opened, may *see* all around and within them the working of the Absolute. At any rate, the Humanism-Idealism of Bosanquet culminates in a theory of the human mind "which brings together the conception of action, freedom, initiative, achievement, on the one hand, and of the coming to oneself, learning one's place and nature, awakening to one's membership, and rejoicing in that, greater than one's self, which underlies and surrounds one's self." [1] No other modern philosopher, we may safely affirm, has set himself so ambitious a task or come so near to success in carrying it out.

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[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 367.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 378. See Ch. viii., § 9, above.

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[1] *Op. cit.,* p. 159.

Chapter X

BOSANQUET'S PHILOSOPHICAL THEORY OF THE STATE

1. SOCIAL AND POLITICAL EXPERIENCE IN THE VICTORIAN AGE

Lord Morley in his *Recollections* has drawn for us in these words a glowing picture of the Victorian Age in the midst of which idealism became the dominant philosophy in England:—

"In our country at least it was an epoch of hearts uplifted with hope, and brains active with sober and manly reason for the common good. Some ages are marked as sentimental, others stand conspicuous as rational. The Victorian Age was happier than most in the flow of both these currents into a common stream of vigorous and effective talent. New truths were welcomed in free minds, and free minds make brave men. Old prejudices were disarmed. Fresh principles were set afloat, and supported by the right reasons. The standards of ambition rose higher and purer. Men learned to care more for one another. Sense of proportion among the claims of leading questions to the world's attention became more wisely tempered. The rational prevented the sentimental from falling into pure emotional. Bacon was prince in intellect and large wisdom of the world, yet it was Bacon who penned that deep appeal from thought to feeling, 'the nobler a soul is, the more objects of compassion it hath.' This of the great Elizabethan was one prevailing note in our Victorian age."[1]

These fine phrases—"brains active with sober and manly reason for the common good," "men learned to care more for one another"—give the clue to the attitude toward the state of all the idealist writers of this period, from F. H. Bradley in his *Ethical Studies* and T. H. Green in his *Principles of Political Obligation* to Bosanquet in his *Philosophical Theory of the State*. They express the social facts transcribed in their social theory. It was an age when the national conscience was beginning to be profoundly stirred by the social and economic effects of the industrial system upon large masses of the population. The *laissez-faire* individualism then dominant in much of English thought was being weighed and found wanting. Mill, though an individualist in his conception of "liberty," inspired with his principle of "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" a movement of social reform which in practice aimed not at "pleasure" but at raising the concrete standard of life and thereby developing a higher type of mind and character. Ruskin challenged a political economy which divorced commercial success from responsibility for its effects upon the lives of the workers as human beings. Both Ruskin and William Morris preached and fought for the restoration of individual spontaneity and artistic initiative in the handicrafts. Arnold Toynbee stimulated the movement for the breaking down of class-ignorance and class-exclusiveness which took shape in Toynbee Hall—the prototype and model of many other "settlements." The London Charity Organisation Society experimented in the administration of charity, so as not to pauperise the sufferer and make him dependent upon further charity but rather to cut at the root of the trouble by building up character, by "helping the sufferer to help himself." Throughout this period we note a keen and active public spirit, a sense of social responsibility, a recognition of duties which are also opportunities for service. In neighbourhood-spirit and citizen-spirit the ideal of the *common good* took for the individual concrete shape according to his "station," which defined for him what we may, with equal appropriateness, calls his functions, his duties, and his rights.

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[1] *Recollections*, Vol. ii, pp. 365-6.

Bosanquet's theory of the state is instinct with the best temper of his age. It attempts to be the philosophical interpretation of the implications of public-spirited citizenship. He wrote in 1890:—

"We look forward to a society organised in convenient districts, in which men and women, pursuing their different callings, will live together with care for one another, and with, in all essentials, the same education, the same enjoyments, the same capacities. These men and women will work together in councils and on committees; and while fearlessly employing stringent legal powers in the public interest, yet will be aware, by sympathy and experience, of the extreme flexibility and complication of modern life, which responds so unexpectedly to the most simple interference; they will have a pride in their schools and their libraries, in their streets, and their dwellings, in their workshops and their warehouses. . . . The only thing I dread in the system known as Socialism is the cutting off individual initiative outside certain duties specified by rule. . . . What is wanted is the habituation of the English citizen to his rights and duties, by training in organisation, in administration, in what I may call neighbourly public spirit. . . . Such as the citizen is, such the society will be; and the true union of social and individual reform lies in the moulding of the individual mind to the public purpose."[1]

In passages such as these we have the roots of Bosanquet's theories of the "general will," of the state as a "moral organism" and of institutions as "ethical ideas." For him the mainspring of healthy political life lies in the individual, but *in the individual as organ of the common good.* This does not mean that every man is to become a public official. "The duties of citizenship will not necessarily drag us out of private life into politics."[2] It is enough that we should understand that our lives, in all their special interests and activities, bear upon the quality of the common life, perhaps only in our immediate neighbourhood, perhaps affecting the wider circle of the nation. Individuals cannot escape the fact that, as fellow-citizens, they are very literally "members one of another." Home and family, workshop, profession, trades union, church—all these are "nurseries of citizenship and symbols of the social will, and must be made more so." The formula for the moral life is simple and plain. "While remaining in some recognised groove, some accepted form of duty, men should bear in mind that their little life has value only as embodying some element of a common good. Therefore, while faithfully working in their groove, they must apply to it the best conception of human welfare that they can."[3] Thus, for example, "we all employ labour. The least wealthy of us, as an aggregate, employ most. How we spend our money and what labour we employ determine nothing less than this: on what things the working people of this and other countries have to spend their lives and under what conditions their lives are to be spent. If we will have nasty things, shoddy things, vulgar things, ugly things, we are condemning somebody to make them. If we will have impossibly cheap things, we are condemning somebody to work without proper pay." [1]

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[1] *Essays and Addresses,* pp. 24-27.

[2] *Aspects of the Social Problem,* p. 12.

[3] *Op. cit.,* p. 10.

It must be abundantly clear that Bosanquet, whatever else he may do, does not feed the individual into the maw of a moloch called "the state." But he summons individuals to think of themselves as citizens, *i.e.*, as foci of public spirit, as organs of the general will which is the will for the common good.

His attitude toward governmental action illustrates this point. He welcomes the expert official with his detailed knowledge and trained mind, but he looks for initiative to the private citizens. Theirs it is to organise themselves for the furtherance of their various interests. Theirs it is to devise a solution of their own problems by joint action. It is "only when private action runs against a barrier, that it must have the power of transforming itself into public action." [2] Hence his well-known principle that state-action should remove obstacles and hindrances or create opportunities, in short, open channels for the exercise of the individual's public-spirited initiative, but that it should avoid relieving the individual citizen of duties, or taking away from him functions, in the discharge of which he can develop his judgment and his character and learn by experience, in success or failure, his wisdom or his folly, his strength of purpose or his weakness.

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[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 11.

[2] *Essays and Addresses*, p. 40.

We are often told that German theory and practice sacrifice the individual to the state, make him a mere wheel in an efficiently organised machine, discourage his initiative and independence of judgment. Be this true or false, at any rate it is worth pointing out that there is nothing to which Bosanquet's theory attaches greater value than the development of strong, self-reliant, enterprising individuals, ready to shoulder their responsibilities and to meet with courage and self-control whatever fortune may bring. At the same time, Bosanquet steers completely clear of that "individualism" which postulates a fundamental antithesis of "self" and "others," individual and community, precisely because he insists on the *citizen-character* of his individuals *i.e.,* because he reminds each man that his various social relations, summed up in his membership in the state, not only give positive guidance and content to his will, but are his chief source of inspiration, of the sense that his life is worth while. Individuals alive with the spirit of citizenship need, in his view, a minimum of that kind of government action or compulsion which takes away from them some element of their responsibilities and hands it over to public machinery and public officials. In this spirit he criticised, in 1906, the proposal to pay old-age pensions out of public funds, on the ground that to relieve men and women of the responsibility of planning for their old age during the years of health and strength for work is inevitably to weaken their purpose, to shorten their views, to make their lives so much more shiftless and thriftless. Similarly, he was wont to argue that it is better for a man to be paid, say, monthly or quarterly rather than daily or weekly, because it requires more self-control to administer a larger sum; the man has to look further ahead and plan the economy of his life on a more comprehensive scale instead of living from hand to mouth, meeting only each day's needs as they arise. He was opposed even to providing free meals for school children from very poor families on the ground that this policy means taking away from families, anyhow trembling on the brink of complete demoralisation, one of the last effective stimuli toward continuing the effort to meet their parental responsibilities. In all these instances Bosanquet's attitude is manifestly open to criticism, and there is no need to enumerate the obvious replies that can be made or to point out that the policies which Bosanquet criticised have frequently been adopted and have not, in the judgment of competent observers, led to the abuses and ill-effects which he feared. There is nothing more debatable in the whole field of social theory than the correct application of general principles. But disagreement on details does not affect the general principle that all state-action should be judged by its effects on the moral character of the citizens. Bosanquet has before him throughout the ideal of men meeting the problems and difficulties of their lives as far as possible out of their own resources of character and intelligence, singly or by voluntary coöperation, rather than looking for relief to paternal state-interference. At any rate, there can be no doubt about what Bosanquet admires most in the political genius of his race:—

"When people deny logical capacity to the English mind I always take a distinction. I say, Yes, distaste amounting to incapacity for formal logic, if you please. Leave that to others. But for concrete logic, the creative spirit of things, what is really the common basis of politics and poetry, I am convinced there is not, and never has been, a national mind more highly endowed than the English. I point to the great organised institutions which have sprung unaided from the brain of our wage-earning class. I ask if the civilised world can show a practical logic to match them." [1]

Here the philosopher acclaims the same institution-building sense for self-management which the historian thus describes:—

"Throughout this period, both before and after 1867, one of the features of British life was the increasing multiplication of local bodies for all kinds of purposes—Boards of Health, Burial Boards, Road Boards, Boards of Guardians, School Boards. Their multiplicity formed one of the most impressive contrasts between self-governing Britain and the bureaucratic lands of Europe, where all this administrative work was, for the most part, highly centralised. At the same time, the older local authorities, and especially the Municipal Councils of the towns, were steadily enlarging their powers, and assuming a multitude of new functions. There was no uniformity or system in all this development. Each Town Council, when it found the need for new powers, applied to Parliament for a private Act. And all this pullulating activity was submitted to scarcely any supervision or control by the national government. It was the spontaneous activity of a self-governing people, other aspects of which were to be found in the innumerable voluntary organisations for religious, charitable, political, commercial, and industrial purposes which daily sprang into being. . . . Some coördination and concentration was obviously necessary. The process was begun by the institution of the Local Government Board in 1871. But it is profoundly characteristic of Britain, and an evidence of the strength of the self-governing spirit by which the whole community was permeated, that the organisation of the British Society for common purposes proceeded thus, not from the top downwards, but from the bottom upwards." [1]

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[1] *Social and International Ideals,* pp. 18, 19.

What Muir here says about getting new powers from Parliament and about the coördination of the powers so given, corresponds exactly to two of the functions which Bosanquet assigns to the state, *viz.*, that of removing hindrances and that of ultimate adjustment. In any case, the bottom fact in his analysis of the state is the "creative logic" of citizens working out the realisation of their common purposes. And though friction and conflict often accompany this process, yet behind it lies the broad basis of the actual many-sided life of the community. It is from the individual's membership in this life that his public spirit draws its substantial orientation—the scheme of purposes and values which, in daily living, he sustains and acknowledges, though he may not have any explicit theory about it at all.

2. TWO VIEWS OF THE "INDIVIDUAL"

In outlining the experience to be transcribed by the philosophical theory of the state, we have already touched on many of the central doctrines of the idealistic transcript. It is plainly an attempt to give an adequate rendering in theory of that public-spirited individualism in practice which has been the happy birthright of the English people.

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[1] Ramsay Muir, *National Self-Government*, pp. 166-167.

Its merits are best appreciated by comparison with that other interpretation of individualism of which J. S. Mill and Herbert Spencer are the best representatives. Because of their distrust of "the state," the individualism of these thinkers divides the citizen's life between "private" and "public" interests and functions and thus misses the clue to a concrete analysis of citizen-spirit and citizen-duty. Their theory inclines toward Seeley's principle that complete liberty consists in absence of all government. It is interested in securing not better government but less government. It is jealous of any increase in the number, or power, or functions of public officials ("bureaucrats"). It is suspicious of all proposals to achieve public ends through public agencies. It seeks to stake out, as it were, around each individual an area of private self-determination in which "others" shall have no say. The function to which it would restrict the state is that of keeping the peace between these social atoms, of preventing destructive collisions between them. It is an individualism oriented toward a life of competition, tempered, at best, by laws defining the reciprocal rights of the competing individuals, with the state in the background as the big policeman to prevent or punish infringements of these rights. The idealistic theory, on the other hand, starts frankly from the *law-abiding* citizen or, in other words, from the public-spirited individual, who manages even his "private" affairs, of family or business or profession, with the clear recognition that they are his readiest and most effective channels for rendering service to the "common good." This common good it conceives as substantially realised, or at least as in process of realisation, in the actual concrete life of the citizen's community, organised for this very purpose as a "state." Within this organised life the individual has "his station and its duties."

3. CURRENT CRITICISMS OF THE IDEALISTIC THEORY OF THE STATE

This is the theory of the state which is being challenged on all sides at the present day. The point at issue is not what function political theory should ascribe to the state. All sides agree with Aristotle that the state exists "for the sake of the good life." All sides agree that "man is a political animal." All sides agree, in short, that the good life is a common life and that a common life implies organisation of some sort. What is disputed is that actual states, as we know them, fulfill the function of securing effectively the good life for all their members. What is challenged is that states, as at present organised, are either the only or the best possible organisations for the good life. "The State," as exhibited in actual "states," is being weighed and found wanting. Where the idealist analyses it as realising the common good with substantial success, the critic's verdict is that "the state is the ablest architect of moral and material ruin that man has yet produced." [1] The idealist theory, in short, is being accused of idealising the actual, or finding in it a perfection which is not there and thus standing in the way of reform.

This challenge, too, appeals to facts of experience in its support, and it is worth while for us to appreciate the nature of these facts. There is, first, the "international problem," which was barely beginning to be an ugly menace in the Mid-Victorian age, but which has since turned Europe first into an armed camp and then into shambles. We have become acutely aware of how European commerce and finance, extending their operations into extra-European countries, have intensified national antagonisms in proportion as they have enlisted the support of national governments and thus added the power of armed force to the power of the purse. The dangerous relations between nation-states, each claiming absolute sovereignty, none brooking interference with its "honour" and its "vital interests," have come to loom larger in the minds of political thinkers than the relations of the citizen to the state of his loyalty and his love. But, secondly, even this latter problem has undergone profound transformation under the pressure of the "social problem." There is the class-struggle between organised "labour," seeking by the exercise of economic and political power to obtain a control over the conditions of its life, and "capital" organised to resist labour's demands. Within each nation and between the nations, the dominant phenomenon has become a struggle for power—whose will is to be master.

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[1] "The Superstition of the State," Literary Supplement of the London *Times,* July 18, 1918.

All modern criticisms of the state are born of the profound dissatisfaction with this condition of things. They aim at finding new forms of organisation which shall better correspond to the demands of social and economic justice, which shall less readily foster antagonisms between classes and nations. And the criticism of actual states has inevitably extended to the idealist theory of "the State" as seeming to ignore, if not to justify, the imperfections of the actual.

To feel the force of these critical analyses of the state, we need not go the length of Mr. Bertrand Russell's sneer that the State consists of elderly gentlemen below the average moral level of the community; and that with increasing government control the State has become a "universal prison" in which conscientious objectors are the only free men.[1] Far more solid and plausible are the theories which start from the multitudinous conflicts of interests composing the ever-shifting pattern of politics. The state, according to them, is an organisation of human beings occupying a certain territory, of whom some govern and the rest are governed. The government, on behalf of the whole body, claims sovereignty, *i.e.*, unlimited authority against all alien state-bodies as well as over all groups or organisations within the state which it governs. But an empirical scrutiny of the acts and policies of any government, *i.e.*, of the men actually in control of power, leads to the conclusion that, though in theory they are functionaries of the whole body, organs of the common will, trustees of the common good, in practice they tend to identify the interests of the class to which they belong or of the influences to which they are accessible with those of the community as a whole. Though in theory they act with the consent of the governed and for the true good of the whole, in fact their actions can often not be effectively controlled by public opinion, and even widespread dissent may be suppressed by the exercise of force. The close union in modern politics of economic and political power lends colour to this analysis. A society of which the organisation is politically democratic but economically oligarchic is in an unstable equilibrium. Though theory, under the name of the "common good," may postulate a fundamental unity and harmony of interests, in actual fact rival interests are straining against each other to secure or maintain, as the case may be, control over the legislative and administrative machinery. Just as the movement for the emancipation of women has been one long struggle for the abolition of laws which, in imposing all sorts of economic and political disabilities on women, expressed a false theory of their proper function and status, so the weapons by which organised labour compels governments to bargain and write the terms agreed upon into the fabric of the nation's laws are aimed not merely at the existing laws, but at the inadequate theory of the welfare of the working classes held by those whose "rights" and "vested interests" are in the existing laws entrenched. In the ideal state laws may fulfil their function of expressing impartially the common good, *i.e.*, the equitably adjusted and harmonised interests of all. In every actual state, the law, in formula and judicial interpretation, not only lags behind the effects on human happiness of economic forces and the demands of an enlightened public conscience but, as it stands, embodies a theory of the common good biased by the interests of those who have the power to make the law.[1]

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[1] See his message on "War and Individual Liberty," in *The Masses,* July, 1917.

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[1] Another line of criticism starts from the relation of church to state (cf. H. J. Laski, *The Problem of Sovereignty*). Can any church the theology of which distinguishes between divine and temporal authority acknowledge the absolute sovereignty of the State? Let alone the control of doctrine by the state in an "established" church, does not any church by owning property become subject to a judicial control which may claim to extend even to its dogma? Is there not always here a danger of conflict between religious freedom and political authority? Where points of conscience and of faith come into play, that "beloved community" in which Royce found the core of religion ceases to be necessarily identical with the state of which the believer is a citizen. Men have renounced their citizenship rather than submit. There are too many historical instances of such conflict to make it self-evident that every citizen can find in his state the Kingdom of God on earth. (Cf. "The Kingdom of God has come on earth in every civilized society where men live and work together, doing

4. "MY STATION AND ITS DUTIES"

In the face of criticisms such as these, what defence can the idealistic analysis offer for the state? Its formula, "my station and its duties," great as were its services in giving a concrete content to Kant's empty "good will," yet seems to provide no criterion for distinguishing what is good and what is bad in different systems of stations. It defines the "good life" with equal aptness, be the citizen's state democratic or autocratic. It is neutral to that criticism and reform of constitutions and institutions of which the present world is full. It points out to a king that he has a function and an opportunity. It tells him to be a good king. It does not ask whether it were not better that there be no king at all. Or, to take an extreme example, could not a prostitute be said to have her station and duties? Her profession has almost always been tolerated and frequently regulated in the public interest. Reflection on this fact coupled with the unbroken history of prostitution gives point to the question. Social investigators say that prostitutes will be found to take a professional pride in satisfying their customers, in being "good" prostitutes, as other women are good mothers or wives. Clearly, the whole of civic morality cannot be compressed into the formula, "My station and its duties." There is need, also, of weighing the existing system of stations ("the established order") by some moral principle.

Bosanquet's handling of the problem of self-government exhibits a similar aloofness from the point of view of the

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their best for the whole society and for mankind. When two or three are gathered together, co-operating for a social good, there is the Divine Spirit in the midst of them." Bosanquet, *Essays and Addresses,* p. 121.)

student who, out of the social and political unrest of the present day, has become a critic and a reformer. To most of us the term suggests democracy, "government of the people by the people for the people." It invites to an analysis of representative institutions. It suggests constitutional experiments like proportional representation or the initiative and referendum. Yet this problem of the effective participation of the citizen in determining the legislative and foreign policy of his own state—a privilege which in the citizen of the Greek city-state Bosanquet well knows how to appreciate [1]—hardly attracts his interest in the modern nation-state at all. He praises the Greeks, in the first chapter of his *Philosophical Theory of the State*, for inventing the simple device of government by discussion and vote, with the minority acquiescing in the will of the majority, but in his analysis of the modern nation-state it receives no further attention. Yet he is well aware that philosophical interest in the state has flourished most at times when strong national sentiment has gone hand in hand with a movement towards democracy and the "sovereignty of the people." The influence of Plato has probably been decisive with him here. A citizen of an extreme democracy, Plato omits from his analysis of the ideal state every single feature of actual democracy with which he was familiar. There is no provision in his *Republic* for government by discussion and vote. There is no opportunity for the mass of the people to have a voice in the management of their state. The rule of philosopher-kings is the rule of an enlightened bureaucracy. Granted that it would be good government, is there nothing in Mill's taunt that the worst parody of self-government is the good government of a wise and benevolent autocrat?

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[1] See "Some Socialistic Features in Ancient Societies," in *Essays and Addresses.*

So, again, with Hegel, Bosanquet holds "the State" (which means, in practice, for each of us his own nation-state) to be the citizen's ultimate moral authority, the keeper, as it were, of his conscience. Hence, like Hegel, he denies that the same principles of conduct apply between states which apply between the citizens of a state, or that a state can admit or consent to the creation of any authority above itself. That a state is not on all fours with the individual in the nature and conditions of its action may readily be granted. But, what is the bearing of this on the practical problem of how best to give effect to the love of peace among the peoples and to their sense of common interests deeper than national divisions? Can nothing be done to curb aggressive nationalism and check the recurrence of war? Bosanquet's reply tells us, in effect, to work not for a supra-national organisation but for a *purification of the will of each state.* A healthy state, he declares, is non-militant in temper. States are peaceful or war-like according as their internal condition is or is not one of stability and social justice. States in which the supreme, non-competitive, humanising values—knowledge, art, religion, human sympathy between classes—are dominant in the lives of the citizens will live in peace with each other. As for a supra-national state, it is bound to fail for lack of a common experience, such as enables men to understand each others' ways and make allowances for each other and work together under the same laws and institutions.[1] But it may be suggested that this very condition, viz., a common experience and a recognition of common interests, has largely been supplied by the war. On force alone the league of nations cannot rest. It must be rooted in a deep will to sustain it, and this will must be a will of the constituent states running through the rank and file of their citizens. We must learn to think internationally as well as to think nationally. Could not the loyal citizen be proud of the loyalty of his state to the league and watch jealously over its loyalty? If he is to do this, he and his state must certainly be ready for sacrifices and self-denying ordinances in the interests of the common society of nations. The very need of coöperation in the war has supplied some training in such sacrifices of national prestige and advantage for a common cause. The will is there in rudiment. Have we not here, then, the first germ of an evolution which will, not supersede and abolish, but subordinate the nation-states to a league of nations organised for their common good? Even on Hegelian principles a will for the common good must seek to create for itself an organisation through which it can be effective. And against such a movement neither the fact nor the theory of the absolute sovereignty of the nation-state can stand.

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[1] *Cf.* the volume entitled *Social and International Ideals, passim.*

5. FACT AND THEORY IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE STATE

The issue between the idealists and their critics brings to light a very genuine difficulty. They disagree just because they have a common basis in the theory that the function of the state is to be an organ of the good life. Now a theory to be true should be a rendering of facts "as they are." Hence the idealist strives, by appreciative analysis, to point out how actual states do actually fulfil the function which theory ascribes to them. The critic, also, fitting the theory to the facts, reports a misfit. No actual state, he declares, is, here and now, what a state "ought to be." It functions, indeed; but it functions most imperfectly. And thus the problem arises how it can be made to function better. The idealist has no wish to deny the need for reforms, but he is more interested in dwelling on the positive achievement and value of actual institutions. He wants illustrations of the truth of the common theory, drawn from the actual working of states, and he is driven to seek them in everything that is actual. Yet he is uneasily conscious that any actual institution lends itself to a counter-argument on the ground of the obvious defects of its working. It must certainly be admitted that a great deal of idealist theory of the state strikes even sympathetic readers as either not coming to close grips with the actual working of present-day institutions at all, or else as forming altogether too rosy an estimate of the sweet reasonableness of things as they are and throwing the blame of imperfections, if there are any, on the lack of character and public spirit in the citizens rather than on remediable faults in the established order. Foolish as it would be to ignore the services rendered by actual institutions or the wisdom of the homely advice to do one's best in one's station, whatever that may be, yet the "creative logic" of man cannot be debarred from remoulding the whole system of stations and the laws which define and sustain them. The well-known jibe that Hegel mistook the kingdom of Prussia for the Kingdom of Heaven is grossly unfair, yet the pull of much idealistic theory is toward conservatism. With all their fine sense for history and evolution, the thinkers of the Hegelian School write as if they sometimes forgot that states have not merely a history behind them but also a history before them, that they are not merely products of evolution but still in process of evolving. The mobile spirit of man is ever refashioning its garment of institutions. No one can ever set any limits to the experimentation in the organs of self-government which lies still before us, and no theory should ever seem to predicate of any actual set of institutions the finality of perfection.

All the criticisms of the "idealistic" theory of the state which we have just touched upon may be condensed into a single sentence: the term "the State," as used by the idealist, covers two things which the critics insist on distinguishing: it covers both the community or nation and the government—both the ideal values of which the community is the bearer and the particular arrangements or machinery by which its life is regulated. It covers—to put it crudely—both the spirit and the body. Granted that the spirit must embody itself, granted that the life of the community must be carried on in ordered forms, granted that there must be government and authority of some sort, does it follow from the recognition of the value of the spirit that its particular embodiment, at any one time, meets its own demands? In an ideal state, like Plato's, the contrast may be reduced to the vanishing point, but in actual states it is the ever present stimulus to reform. Moreover, Plato, we must remember, is laying down a pattern for the ideal legislator to work on; he is tracing the lineaments of a state which should be worthy of the devotion of its citizens. He is not upholding any actual state of his own time as fulfilling his ideal; still less is he writing like a "lover" of Athens in the spirit of Pericles' Funeral Oration.

6. BOSANQUET'S THEORY AS A PHILOSOPHY OF PATRIOTISM

Now *this* is precisely what the idealist thinkers are doing: they are writing very literally as lovers of the State. In Bosanquet's striking phrase, they seek to exhibit "the greatness and ideality of life in its commonest actual phases." [1] They "believe" in it. They are "enthusiastic" in the analysis of it.[2] They are apostles of the religion of patriotism. In fact, *the idealistic philosophy of the state is a philosophy of patriotism,* or, as Royce would have said, of loyalty. It transcribes the citizen's love for his country and his people, for its language, its history, its institutions, for its achievements in the arts and sciences, in commerce and industry, in statecraft, too, and in war. It seeks to render in explicit theory his sense of the ideal values in which, as a member of his community, he shares and through which his own life is filled with value. It seeks to exhibit as reasonable and well-grounded the citizen's conviction that, notwithstanding much which he criticises and is dissatisfied with, his community is something in the service of which it is worth while to live and, if need be, to die. The state, approached from this angle, has a very different meaning from that which the term bears for the student of constitutional history, for the lawyer, for the politician. To them, the state means government, be it in the sense of the system and machinery, or in the sense of the men or classes exercising the function, of governing. To the idealist, the term "state" means all that "city" (*polis*) meant to Plato and Aristotle—the community as offering to its members all the activities which make a full and rounded human life. *The state is, in short, for him a spiritual phenomenon, and citizenship a great spiritual experience.*

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[1] *Philosophical Theory of the State,* p. xi.

[2] *Cf.* Bosanquet's complaint that the critics of the state "hardly believe in actual society as a botanist believes in plants, or a biologist in vital processes. . . . Those who cannot be enthusiastic in the study of society as it is, would not be so in the study of a better society if they had it"; *op. cit.,* pp. x, xi.

It seems undeniable that a theory framed from this point of view brings out an aspect of the experience of citizenship which historian and lawyer, politician and reformer, from their several points of view, do not cover. If the idealist's theory is often weak where their theories are strong, yet equally are theirs weak or at least incomplete, so far as they omit this line of analysis. It approaches from a fresh angle the interpretation of the common formula that the State, or, as we had better say now, the Community, exists for the sake of the good life. When the idealist calls citizen-life "good," he means that it brings into the individual's existence a real and enduring value which would otherwise be lacking, that in the absence of community-life human nature would be degraded to a lower level; that its needs and especially its spiritual needs would not be so fully met, even if they were met at all; that through his share in the total achievement of the community the individual's existence is enriched and developed far beyond what his own unaided effort could gain for him. That tantalising phrase, "realisation of the ideal in the actual," is but the formula for every spiritual experience. "Ideal" here means not an unrealised or not-yet-realised better or best, but the *universal* or *essential* character of community-life considered from the moral point of view. This character is not exhibited by arguing merely in terms of health, contentment, pleasure, wages, hours of work, privileges, rights, justice, though according to circumstances it will include all these. But more fundamental than these is a moral service which community-life renders to human nature in individual men and women. This is the "ideal" or "universal," the realisation of which in the "actual" it is the task of philosophy—deliberately likened to "the gaze of a child or of an artist" [1]—to trace, and from which the reformer himself must draw his inspiration and the hope of his success.

7. LIBERTY

What is the nature of this service? We may exhibit it in three ways. (a) There is, first, the idealist's theory of liberty. Because he is dealing with a spiritual experience and looking to what human nature demands for its full realisation or satisfaction, he casts his theory in psychological language, in terms of mind, will, purpose. Here is a characteristic utterance: "If you start with a human being as he is in fact, and try to devise what will furnish him with an outlet and a stable purpose capable of doing justice to his capacities—a satisfying object of life—you will be driven on by the necessity of the facts at least as far as the State, and perhaps further." [2] We are here on the track of Rousseau's famous analysis of the three stages or phases of liberty: natural, civil and moral—the transformation of the natural man into the moral man through his membership in the "civil state;" a typical story of the saving of the human soul. "What man acquires in the civil state is moral liberty, which alone makes him truly master of himself. For the mere impulse of appetite is slavery; while obedience to a law which we prescribe to ourselves is liberty."[1] Bosanquet, in his analysis of self-government and liberty,[2] has brilliantly restated the argument and drawn, in a further masterly chapter,[3] upon the resources of modern psychology in order to exhibit the life of a typical community as a tissue of minds and wills, playing into and at points against each other, but fundamentally functioning together for a common purpose, of the full scope and implications of which no single mind in the tissue is explicitly aware, and which even a sustained effort at critical analysis brings only partially to the level of reflective consciousness. The main point of the argument is, of course, the familiar one that membership in a community organised as a state does not, in principle, interfere with or repress the individual but rather interprets his will to him. It helps him to know the real meaning of his instincts and desires and provides him at the same time with channels of activity through which he can satisfy them.[4]

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[1] Bosanquet, *op. cit.*, p. 1; *cf.* James Russell Lowell, "The Dandelion."

[2] Bosanquet, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

This point of view, again, explains why the idealistic "criticism" of institutions develops into an appreciation of them as "ethical ideas," *i.e.*, as defining actual spheres and opportunities for "self-realisation" through action contributing to the common good. It also explains why the burden of making the most of these opportunities is thrown everywhere on the individual's mind and character; why he is told that character is master over circumstance, and that the welfare of the community depends not so much on tinkering with its institutions as on the public spirit and insight with which they are worked. Hence the appeal to citizenship: work loyally in your groove, for it is your obvious channel of service to the common good, and think chiefly of how much more you can do than you are doing.

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[1] J. J. Rousseau, *The Social Contract,* Bk. I, Ch. viii.

[2] *Op. cit.,* Chs. iii-v.

[3] *Ibid.,* Ch. vi.

[4] The same argument has recently been freshly presented by Professor W. E. Hocking from the illuminating angle that the natural "dialectic" or "self-righting tendency" of human instincts, working out their satisfaction through trial and error in experience, issues broadly in the same preferences and valuations which the pressure and guidance of the community through its education and institutions bring home to the individual (*cf. Human Nature and its Remaking,* especially Part v). Professor L. T. Hobhouse, in his criticism of the idealistic theory of freedom (*cf. The Metaphysical Theory of the State,* Lect. iii, especially pp. 59ff.), appears to ignore this side of the idealists' argument completely.

8. THE GENERAL WILL

(b) A second example of the idealistic method of interpreting the concepts of political theory in terms of spiritual experience is to be found in Bosanquet's treatment of the "general will" and its "sovereignty." What is called the "sovereignty of the state" is for Bosanquet the sovereignty of the general will. What, then, is this general will? Where is it revealed? The answer is, at first, perplexing. It is not merely the actual will of the people, or of a majority of them as ascertained by election or referendum. It is not identical with the explicit consent of the governed to the acts of the government. It is not merely the will of the government acting, as it frequently does and must, without the knowledge of the governed, though on their behalf. It is found only by pushing behind the surface-play of political forces, behind the details of constitutional machinery. It is the spirit of the community as a will for The Good, expressing itself concretely through its laws and institutions, its customs and traditions, its industry and commerce, its national art and science, its philosophy and religion. With this spirit of his community the individual learns, in his own unique way, to identify himself;

he grows into one of the organs through which it lives on and develops itself. Of the complex tissue of community-life the individual's conscious purposes form but a fragment, and to him and all his like its ways and achievements and institutions are the standing interpretation of their several wills. The community or general will, thus conceived, is a spiritual fact in which The Good for human nature is, as an actual achievement, largely realised. Any community through membership in which the individual to any extent actually fulfils himself has a right to claim his loyalty, be its form what it may, be its name state, league of nations, or the communion of saints.

9. THE INDIVIDUAL AS AN ORGAN OF THE GENERAL WILL

(c) Our third illustration may fitly take its cue from such a characteristic phrase of Bosanquet's as this: "the moral and spiritual structure which lies behind the visible scene."[1] The visible scene, for the student of the state, is a multitude of human beings, seen as distinct bodies, repeating a specific animal type. To a deeper look, the multitude is not a mere collection or crowd but a unity or whole. They not merely happen to be there together but belong together by all sorts of relations, either shallow or deep. They are organised, which connotes at least division of labour and differentiation of function. They are centres or foci of functions. Thence the further analysis takes two complementary directions. It turns, on the one side, to the individual and traces the bearing of his social relationships and activities upon his given nature of instincts and interests, his needs and capacities. On the other, it analyses the functions as elements in a single common life, of which the individuals are thus functionaries or organs. This yields the "concrete universal" of which the individual is a special differentiation. And yet again, the analysis may reach the same result by starting from the explicit purposes in the individual's mind and tracing out their full bearing and implication. Such analysis, following out the "objective content" of the individual's will into all that it presupposes or implies, will always take us beyond what the individual is actually aware of and beyond what can fairly be called "his" life and action into the lives and actions of others, which enter, with his life and action, into the tissue of a common life and action. The individual's will, as he possesses and embodies it, is a fragment which under the pressure of analysis turns out to be not fully intelligible until the whole context of the general will has been taken into account, so that in the end it is more than a metaphor for the individual to say: "The moral universe in me expresses itself thus." [1] And thence the metaphysical imagination takes wing and, soaring aloft, bids us perceive that all the great historic achievements which we are wont to call "creations of the human spirit"—language, science, art, state, church—are at any rate not human products in the sense that, as wholes, they have been designed by any one man or any body of men planning them together. They have grown rather than been made. Even now they are growing rather than being constructed, though at the growing-points there is much play and counter-play of deliberate purposes. The pattern of the common life grows as a living tissue of wills, complementary or conflicting, none of which, being human, fully understands whither it is going or what it really wants. In the political arena, the aspirations and ideals of men clash like literal "forces." We see this easily enough when the force is against us. Is it less true when the force is in us? And, if so, is it in the end, my will or a will in me, my purpose or a purpose which uses me and works through me? The suggestion is well-nigh irresistible that there is a reason greater than the merely human in these human creations. They are indeed rooted in human nature but through human nature in the universe. They are chapters in the phenomenology of spirit, appearances of the Absolute.

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[1] *Proceedings of the Aristotelean Society,* 1917-18, p. 494.

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[1] *Proceedings of the Aristotelean Society,* 1917-19, p. 499.

EPILOGUE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Chapter XI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

1. ON "PROOF" IN PHILOSOPHY.

The student who has read so far, may well, as he looks back over the various theories which have been presented to him, wonder whether any one of them has any greater claim to his acceptance than any other; whether any one of them can be proved; or whether they are all but so many speculative hypotheses between which it is impossible to decide.

If he is troubled by such questions as these, he will do well to recall what was said in Chapter I[1] about the difference between entertaining a theory and believing it. He will do well to ask himself whether, even if he is in doubt which theory to accept, he has not gained much by his effort to understand them all—whether his understanding of Reality itself has not been enriched by his having learnt to reflect on it from so many different points of view.

But, in addition, the student will also find it worth while to reflect on what he means when he demands "proof" of a philosophical theory.

Modern thought, so it is sometimes said, is guided by two ideals. One of these is *control*. The other is *certainty*. The former ideal was crystallised in Sir Francis

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[1] See Ch. i, § 6.

Bacon's epigram, *scientia est potentia* (knowledge is power). The latter gave rise to the ever-repeated search, from Descartes to Kant and beyond Kant, for a "method" of philosophical reasoning which should yield, if possible, results as certain as those of mathematics. In respect to both ideals the natural sciences seem to many to be markedly superior to philosophy. For, on the one hand, "pure" science can be turned into "applied" science: our knowledge of nature's laws can be used, as Bacon put it, for the "improvement of man's estate." And, on the other hand, every science offers a solid body of authoritative doctrine on the truth of which there is agreement among all who have studied the facts and theories which compose the science.[1] Thus, men who come to philosophy from the side of the sciences are apt to miss the two virtues of applicability and of certainty. Even if a philosophical theory, like one of the several types of idealism, were undeniably true, there is nothing that we can do with it, or that it helps us to do. And, none seems to be undeniably true, or, at least, none can be proved and established beyond the shadow of doubt. Even some philosophers, so we have seen, admit this, as when James Ward offers his Theism for acceptance as a matter of reasonable faith, but not of theoretical proof.[2]

If arguments such as these threaten to put us out of humour with philosophy, it will really be a sign of failure in our philosophising. For, we shall have ignored a number of considerations which, taken together, put the matter in a very different light.

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[1] For a fuller discussion of scientific method in philosophy, see the author's ***Studies in Contemporary Metaphysics,*** **Ch. ii.**

[2] *Cf.* Ch. v, § 7.

2. "CONTROL."

First, theory has, even in science, an interest of its own and does not restrict itself to problems the solution of which promises actual or possible application in practice. In philosophy, even more, the theoretical interest is supreme and has emancipated itself from all bondage to practice. Indeed, this must be so, in so far as philosophy is *reflective.*[1] For, as reflective, philosophy counts the thinking which is guided by practical needs and issues in truths that can be practically applied or used, among its data. And it is, in turn, the "truth" of this thinking, *i.e.*, the degree of its insight into the nature of Reality which philosophy seeks to estimate. In this sense, to philosophise is to "think for thinking's sake", to have no other goal and seek no other reward than the greatest intellectual satisfaction, *i.e.*, the profoundest and most complete insight, which the study of its subject-matter is capable of yielding.

3. "CERTAINTY."

Secondly, as regards certainty, this is at its maximum where, as in mathematics, we deal with what is most general. The more the subject-matter of our study approaches the concrete and empirical, the less do we enjoy the sort of certainty that distinguishes mathematical knowledge. This is especially true of all general propositions in the natural sciences, such as are said to be discovered by inductive reasoning, *i.e.*, by generalisation from observed instances. There are many modern logicians who will not admit that the conclusions of inductive reasoning are ever more than *probable.* It is, thus, the mark of an educated mind not to demand from a study a higher degree of certainty than its subject-matter permits, or, as we should rather express it, such a mind is alive to the conditions on which certainty in respect of a given subject-matter depends.

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[1] See Ch. i, § 4.

4. "ULTIMATE DOUBTS."

The evidence for the uncertainty of philosophical theories is found, on the one hand, in the "ultimate doubts" to which many philosophers confess, and to which all, perhaps, ought to confess if they were sufficiently self-critical; and, on the other hand, more commonly in the disagreements of philosophers with each other.

Ultimate doubts are in order as reflecting the limitation of human knowledge, the "finitude" of the human mind, which everyone who reflects at all will at once admit. To have no ultimate doubts in this sense would be to claim an infallibility and an omniscience such as are not given to mortals. But, on the other hand, such ultimate doubts should really be "ultimate." That is to say, they should really come at the end, when philosophical thinking has done its work. They should save the philosopher from over-confidence and *qualify* his final estimate of his work: but they should not *destroy* that confidence altogether, and condemn his whole enterprise to utter worthlessness because absolute certainty is unattainable. On the contrary, as we said above,[1] every genuine philosopher "believes in his own theory", because, though he may realise that it is not the whole truth, yet he feels sure that it contains some truth, and, indeed, *the* truth so far as it is given to him to apprehend it. His philosophy is "the expression of his unique vision of the world": it is the deepest insight which the energy of his philosophising has enabled him to distil from reflection upon Reality as revealed in his experience. Like Luther before the Diet of Worms, he may feel that no other position is possible for him.[1] This confidence is his birthright as a philosopher. It underlies such ultimate doubts as he may have, and is not destroyed by them. For, at bottom, this confidence has its root in the immediate feeling which, on reflection, becomes the principle that Reality does reveal, or disclose, itself to human experience and thought, even if it does not do so fully to any one human mind.

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[1] See Ch. i, § 6.

5. DISAGREEMENTS AMONG PHILOSOPHERS.

Again, the disagreements among philosophers bear witness at once to the many-sidedness of the universe and to the limitations of any one individual's contact with it. Philosophers all have their individual perspectives, and the very differences between their perspectives, which result in their apprehending Reality differently and emphasising different aspects of it, render at least this positive service that they correct each others' deficiencies and secure the use of all the resources of human experience for the interpretation of Reality.

This has an important bearing on the problem of proof in philosophy. An individual thinker, alone with his own thoughts, may enjoy the certainty which comes from the internal coherence of his thoughts with each other. But "proof", if it means communicating this certainty to another, convincing him, demonstrating the matter to him, raises additional problems incidental to social intercourse, with its "exchange of thoughts" from mind to mind by means of language. Logically, a proposition is said to be proved or demonstrated when it follows from, *i.e.*, when it is implied in, certain other propositions which are called the "premisses" of the proof. Whoever accepts the premisses must, on pain of self-contradiction, accept the conclusion which the premisses imply. For, Reality is so constituted that if it is what the premisses say, it must also be what the conclusion says. The thinker alone with his own thoughts, as we put it just now, feels throughout under the pressure, guidance, control, compulsion (call it what we will) of the logical connections inherent in all he thinks. But, when these logical connections have to operate in the medium of two or more minds communicating with one another by language, a fresh, and perhaps disturbing, factor is introduced. For, the words used must have the *same* meaning for different minds, and the difficulty is precisely to secure, and keep, this sameness of meaning. The task is easiest where the words, or other symbols, are, as in mathematics, emptiest of meaning. It is still relatively easy where, as in the natural sciences, the words and especially the technical terms, can be used in the context of direct acquaintance with the kinds of things to which they refer. In this context of direct acquaintance with the objects of scientific study we secure sameness for different minds, partly by all the devices, from direct physical pointing to unambiguous description, by which different minds come to observe the same object and to know that they both observe it; partly, by practising uniform, or standardised, experimental methods.

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[1] "Hier stehe ich: ich kann nicht anders."

But, when we turn to philosophy, we find that it is much more difficult to secure sameness of the contexts in which words are significantly used. Indeed, if we were right in emphasising, above, the differences in perspective and experience among philosophers, we must expect a corresponding degree of difference in the language used, and therefore a corresponding degree of disagreement and conflict. The same term, for example, will have somewhat different meanings for different philosophers in accordance with the different contexts in which each philosopher uses the term. Different ranges of experience as data for philosophising and different treatments of these data are bound to yield different meanings. Hence, we get such discussions as those concerning the nature of consciousness, or mind, or God. Different *meanings* of these terms correspond to different *theories* of the natures of the things for which the terms stand. And so, lastly, though "Reality" be the word used by all philosophers to name the object of their study, yet the word will have different meanings for different philosophers, because in their philosophising they will draw upon different ranges of experience and so reach different theories of the nature of Reality. Thus it comes to pass that philosophies differ, and that philosophers form groups or schools each holding to the certainty of its view of Reality, but unable to communicate that certainty to its rivals. And we see why this inevitably must be so, from the very nature of the problems with which philosophy deals and the very conditions under which philosophising is conducted.

In the light of this situation, what the student should try to do—and all that he can be expected to do—is to study different philosophies as sympathetically as may be and adopt the one which fits best the pattern of his own experience. He must compare and choose, exercising his rational preference in favour of that philosophy which seems to him to interpret most consistently and comprehensively the nature of Reality as disclosed in his own experience.

In order to facilitate such rational choice, the following comments are offered on the four types of Idealism which have been presented in this book.

6. COMPARISON OF TYPES OF IDEALISM—SPIRITUAL MONISM AND CRITICAL IDEALISM.

The four types of Idealism which we have distinguished have been:

(a) *Spiritual Pluralism*, which interprets Reality as a Society of Spirits;

(b) *Spiritual Monism*, which interprets Reality as the manifestation, or objectification, of a single Spiritual Energy.

(c) *Critical* (*Kantian*) *Idealism*, which avoids offering a theory of Reality but makes clear that every form of experience, because of the universal and necessary principles of "Reason" in it, has a contribution to make to the theory of Reality.

(d) *Absolute Idealism*, which attempts a synthetic, or synoptic, interpretation of Reality in the light of its various "appearances."

Of these four types, two, viz., the second and the third, may be said to be of subordinate importance compared with the other two, though compared among themselves the third is much more important than the second.

The second type of Idealism, viz., *Spiritual Monism*, may fairly be regarded as, in principle, the least significant, because, though it emphasises the unity of Reality, it does so by the device of selecting from experience a single factor and acclaiming it as the Reality underlying all phenomena. At the same time, it assigns to this factor a character so abstract—a qualitatively homogeneous Will of Life-Force—that the actual diversity of phenomena, and especially the existence of a multitude of individualised living beings or centres of will, remains utterly inexplicable. Moreover, not only is the *factual* diversity of the Universe left unexplained, but our *value-judgments*, which affirm the realisation of æsthetic, moral, religious values in existing facts, have likewise no intelligible foundation in the nature of the cosmic Will or Life-Force.

Critical Idealism was described as a half-way house.[1] It is a position to which it is always possible to retire, but in which it is impossible to stop or to abide. Its service, now as in Kant's own time, is to prepare the way for metaphysical speculation by drawing attention to the wealth and range of experience to be taken into account, and by formulating explicitly the ideal of synthetic or synoptic philosophising. Critical Idealism finds its logical fulfillment in Absolute Idealism.

If these estimates of Spiritual Pluralism and Critical Idealism are accepted, the choice is narrowed down to Spiritual Pluralism and Absolute Idealism.

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[1] See Ch. vii, above.

7. COMPARISON OF TYPES OF IDEALISM—SPIRITUAL PLURALISM AND ABSOLUTE IDEALISM.

Spiritual Pluralism, in the eyes of its adherents, possesses the double advantage of being both spiritualistic and pluralistic, *i.e.*, of offering a theory of Reality which denies that there is anything real which is not of the nature of spirit, and which at the same time maintains the distinctness from each other, and the initiative or freedom, of the individual spirits. In short, as James Ward rightly insists, it is a theory of Reality modelled on the pattern of "persons" interacting in human society. Hence, when pushed to its last defences, it recommends itself to our acceptance on the ground that it is the only theory which safeguards human personality and individuality. In taking the society of human persons as "spirits", *i.e.*, as interacting centres of mental activity, inventive, creative, struggling through trial and error towards perfection, as its clue to the structure of Reality, Spiritual Pluralism claims to be, as against Spiritual Monism and Absolute Idealism alike, the only philosophical theory which does justice to human beings as each a unique, originative, self-directing person.

What reply can Absolute Idealism make to these claims? First, as against the denial that anything exists which is not a soul or spirit, however rudimentary, Absolute Idealism appeals, in Bosanquet's words, to the principle that "we must perceive as actual the distinctions which give life its content." [1] We have already seen how Bosanquet applies this principle as an argument against the view that the material objects which constitute our environment, and which we use for our purposes, are "really" psychical. In fact, the speculative hypothesis that our own bodies, let alone other physical things, are really systems of souls of an order of development so low that we can no longer recognise or treat them as souls, has two defects. It extends the application of the terms "soul" or "spirit" by analogy to a point where they become meaningless. And it throws no light whatever on the part which our bodies and other physical things, just as we perceive and think them to be, play in our lives, be it from the economic, the scientific, the æsthetic, the moral, or the religious point of view. Thus, the familiar charge that in the Absolute all distinctions disappear, falls to the ground. On the contrary, on the principle that "we must perceive as actual the distinctions which give life its content", the maintenance of distinctions is essential to the Absolute. Everything is what it is, just because in its existence and nature it is conditioned by other things, and, in turn, conditions them. "When the Absolute falls into water, it becomes a fish," is Bosanquet's boldly epigrammatic way of putting this point. Every phenomenon, just as it is, is a necessary appearance of the Absolute. So far as in it lies, it reveals the nature of the real under just those conditions. In interpreting these statements, however, we must always bear in mind that the phrase, "just as it is," when applied to any object, presupposes the fullest knowledge—the knowledge which includes all relevant evidence and is free from internal contradiction. It follows that Absolute Idealism is not open to the charge which is currently brought against it, viz., the charge of being hostile to natural science. It accepts Nature as defined in scientific theory, but it makes nature, so defined, as an "appearance" of the Absolute by way of reminder that science does not give us the whole truth even about Nature, let alone about Reality which is wider than Nature. It accepts "Matter", and all that physics and chemistry have to say about its constitution, without trying to turn every particle of matter into a soul or spirit. It accepts animal and human minds as late-comers in evolution, and as presupposing both an external environment and a highly-organized physical body. For Absolute Idealism, "it is the true spiritual view which regards Nature as mechanically intelligible," and treats the automatisms and habits of the body as conditions, no less than as instruments, of the mind. Thus, unlike Spiritual Pluralism, it is not open to the criticism voiced, *e.g.*, by L. T. Hobhouse, that "where everything is spiritual, the spiritual loses all distinctive significance."

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[1] *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, p. 240; see, above, Ch. ix, § 7.

Thus, if it is the business of philosophy to "save the appearances", *i.e.*, to maintain and explain, rather than to deny and interpret away, the differences which are actually to be found in the Universe, Absolute Idealism may fairly claim to succeed better than Spiritual Pluralism, and, *a fortiori*, than Spiritual Monism.

But, secondly, there is still to be examined the claim which Spiritual Pluralism puts forward as the champion of the reality of *persons*.

The concept of person or personality has two applications. One is to human beings, whence James Ward would extend it "in a wide sense" not only to animals and plants, but even to objects ordinarily regarded as inanimate. The other application is to God. With the downward extension of the concept through animals and plants to the "material" world, we have dealt in the preceding argument. Now the issue is what we are to mean by "person," *i.e.,* what is to be our *theory* of the nature of a person especially when the term is to be applied to God.

(a) Spiritual Pluralism insists on the distinctness and privacy of individual minds as their most important characteristic. I am not you: every mind is a unit distinct from every other. Absolute Idealism regards each mind as a world, a microcosm, drawing its contents from the Universe, the macrocosm. My mind consists of all my experiences, of what I perceive, think, feel, will. From this point of view, the problem is to study minds as focusing in themselves more or less of the whole Reality, and as being themselves more or less "real" according to the range of what they respond to and the degree of harmony and coherence in their worlds. The formal distinctness of minds, if it does not exactly vanish, becomes subordinate and instrumental to pervading identities. It is a single Reality which appears in the different worlds of different minds—an "identity in differences."

(b) Again, Spiritual Pluralism regards minds (or persons) as centres of initiative, of free activity. The Absolute Idealist, on the other hand, whilst not denying initiative or activity, insists on interpreting these qualities in the light of the view of mental activity as "the active form of totality." [1] In other words, whereas Spiritual Pluralism regards individuality (the character which makes a "person") *abstractly,* as a formal distinctness from "others" and as a quality of initiative (of being one's self and acting on one's own), which may be predicated in *equal* measure of every person, Absolute Idealism regards individuality *concretely,* and, therefore, as a character present in *different degrees*, according as an individual focuses in himself, and acts on the basis of, a wider or a narrower range of contacts with Reality. For Absolute Idealism, the difference between one person and others is a purely negative definition of individuality—a definition by exclusion; whereas what positively constitutes his individuality and makes him different from others is the richness and depth of his mental life.

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[1] See, above, Ch. viii, § 10, and Ch. ix, § 8.

8. GOD.

This division of opinion between Spiritual Pluralism and Absolute Idealism on the best way of conceiving personality, comes to a climax when we consider personality in its application to God.

As we have already seen in dealing with Berkeley,[1] Spiritual Pluralism is the philosophical theory of Reality which is most consonant with the Theism of orthodox Christian theology. Theism appeals to us because it interprets religion by social analogies. God the King, God the Judge, God the Father—always a social relationship supplies the pattern on which the worshipper's thoughts of, and feelings towards, God are moulded. To know God and to be known by Him; to love God and to be loved by Him—are not these phrases drawn from the intimacies of personal intercourse at its best? Hence, modern theology stresses the personality of God as well as the personality of the worshipper. And justly, for self-conscious persons and their intercourse must be ranked by all tests as one of the highest appearances of the Absolute. But for all that a high degree of truth belongs to this way of thinking of God and of His relation to Man, Theism labours under grave difficulties. These difficulties, being of the speculative kind which only dialectic brings to light, need not trouble the simple faith of simple men. But philosophy cannot shut its eyes to them. In conceiving God as a person and attributing to Him love, knowledge, power, will, we expose ourselves to opposite dangers, both equally fatal. For, on the one hand, we feel bound to assert that these qualities exist in God in a perfection utterly beyond anything known in man; but the more we stress this transcendent perfection, the more meaningless do our terms threaten to become. On the other hand, the more we strive to fill our terms with their vivid human meaning, the more we shrink God to the dimensions of the human pattern with which we are familiar. Again, the concept of creation is not easy to apply to the relations of persons. For if a person is a distinct centre of spiritual life, how can one such centre, however eminent, be conceived as giving rise to other centres distinct from, and capable of opposition to, itself? And, lastly, there is the problem of evil, the existence of which has seemed to not a few philosophers and theologians incompatible with the omnipotence of an all-good, all-wise God. The late Dean of Carlisle, the Very Rev. Hastings Rashdall, was not the only contemporary thinker who felt driven by the spectacle of evil to deny the "infinite" power of God, and thus to believe in what is technically called a "finite" God.

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[1] See Ch. iii, § 3.

These illustrations must suffice to show by what sort of contradictions Theism is beset. And no doctrine which contains inherent contradictions can pass in philosophy either as a statement of simple fact or as one of ultimate truth. God, as both Bradley and Bosanquet agree, is an "appearance," though ranking high in the order of appearances. Or, to put this verdict in less technical language, to conceive reality as God is a way of thinking which has a high degree of truth, but which under philosophical criticism turns out still to be inadequate to the nature of reality as a whole.

In other words, the concepts of person and personal intercourse on which Spiritual Pluralism relies seem to the Absolutist to be untenable, if taken as ultimate truth. The Absolute, therefore, must be conceived as impersonal, or, rather, as suprapersonal. What this means may, perhaps, best be appreciated by recalling that to many great thinkers, now as in the past, it has seemed that individual persons, as distinctive centres of consciousness, are evanescent and transitory compared with the spiritual achievements which they help to preserve and carry on, or with the spiritual values with which they identify themselves and for which they live. Religion has been defined as "faith in the conservation of values." What, on this view, we care about most is, not the indefinite continuance of our distinct selves, but the continuance of the spiritual values through the identification with which we become what we are and count in our own eyes and in those of our fellows. And even "continuance," if it means endless duration, does not adequately express the goal of our desire. What we want is rather the assurance that the things which fill our lives with value belong to the very nature of the real and are securely grounded there. What, in short, this theory tries to render is the not unfamiliar experience of a man saying, out of his very loyalty and devotion to a cause (say, his country, or a scientific theory, or a plan for social reform), that his personal survival does not matter if but the cause for which he cares above all else prevails. And this desire of his implies, even if he is not philosopher enough to recognise the fact, that his cause should prevail because it is such as to be securely rooted in the whole nature of things—in the Absolute. Religion, from this point of view, is the response of the "finite" mind to the "infinite" whole, to Reality as the embodiment of spiritual value. It is the travail of the imperfect striving after the perfection which, in this very travail, it feels to be, in principle, one with itself.

Obviously, we are here moving in a realm where clear-cut demonstration is impossible. Can God be conceived at once as the ultimate Reality and as a person, as "person" is understood when applied to a human being? Can Reality as a whole be conceived as a single self-conscious Spirit, and, if so, how are finite self-conscious spirits related to it? Or is self-consciousness merely an "appearance", ranking indeed as the highest and as our nearest clue to the nature of Reality, but still not as wholly adequate? Facing such ultimate problems as these with sincerity and courage, the greatest thinkers in human history have come to divergent conclusions, and will, no doubt, continue to do so in future under the conditions of human finitude. All that can be asked of us is that we should seek the truth as steadfastly as they, using always, in Bosanquet's words, "the best of logic and the best of life." For, it matters profoundly what we philosophise with, *i.e.*, in what sorts of experience we find our most illuminating clues to the nature of the real. This is what the great idealists bring home to us. And, therefore, whether or no we agree with their conclusions, we cannot follow a better example than theirs in our search for a reasonable faith for open-minded men."

Idealism, as Josiah Royce once said, is "the expression of the very soul of our civilisation." It will prove a vain fancy only if our civilization has no soul to express.

NOTE

ON

REALITY, EXISTENCE, AND DEGREES OF REALITY

A topic which is closely connected with the doctrine of "appearances" in Absolute Idealism, and which has provoked much criticism, is that of "degrees of reality." Appearances are said to be ranked by their degree of reality, sometimes also called their "degree of truth." What is meant is that appearances differ in the light which they throw on the nature of Reality as a whole; that, whilst every appearance can teach us something of the nature of Reality, some appearances yield far more adequate clues than others.

The difficulties which some critics have found in this doctrine can perhaps be removed, at least in part, by the following reflections.

Philosophy is, at bottom, an effort to know "reality" or the "real world." Now the real world is, certainly, the world which exists. "To be real" is a common synonym for "to exist." But whatever exists has also a definite quality, character, nature. For example, when I perceive something, I learn, not only *that* it is, but also *what* it is. Over the whole field of experience, whatever exists, exists as having a definite character. Existence and character, "that" and "what," go together—distinguishable, but not separable. But a difficulty arises from the fact that an object, though it must always present itself in some character, does not always present itself in its *true* character or as it *really* is. In other words, the terms "reality" or "real" refer, not only to the existence of objects, but also to their nature, as when we speak of the "real nature" of a thing. "Real," in this second sense, is a synonym, not of "existent," but of "true."

Even philosophers have sometimes been misled by forgetting, not only that "real" has these two senses, but also that, though we can distinguish them, we cannot divorce them one from the other. Some philosophers, for example, speak of "degrees of reality or truth," whereas others insist that an object is either real or unreal, but that it cannot be, as it were, partially real. The former are taking "reality" chiefly in the sense of real nature; the latter are thinking chiefly of existence. Now, granted that there would be a paradox in speaking of "degrees of existence," there is, surely, no paradox in saying that an object may be perceived or thought in more or less of its real character. For, whenever we perceive or think, we perceive or think something to be so-and-so. But the so-and-so may, in any given case, stand for a mere fragment of the fact as it really is; and, apart from being fragmentary, and, therefore, false by omission, there may be positive error by false additions and connections. To urge, in such a case, that what we perceive and think is not the *whole* nature of the object, or to say that one view of the object includes more of its real nature than another, is surely appropriate and legitimate. And this, put quite simply, is what the doctrine of degrees of reality means.

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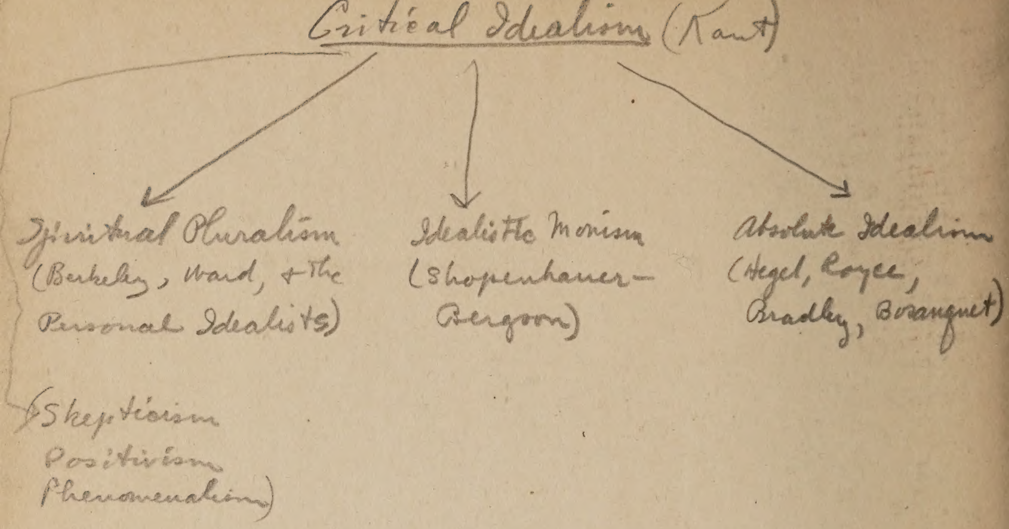

Critical Idealism (Kant)

Spiritual Pluralism (Berkeley, Ward, & the Personal Idealists)

Idealistic Monism (Shopenhauer-Bergson)

Absolute Idealism (Hegel, Royce, Bradley, Bosanquet)

(Skepticism
Positivism
Phenomenalism)

(Critical Idealism is undeveloped - it leads to one of the three branches above).

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